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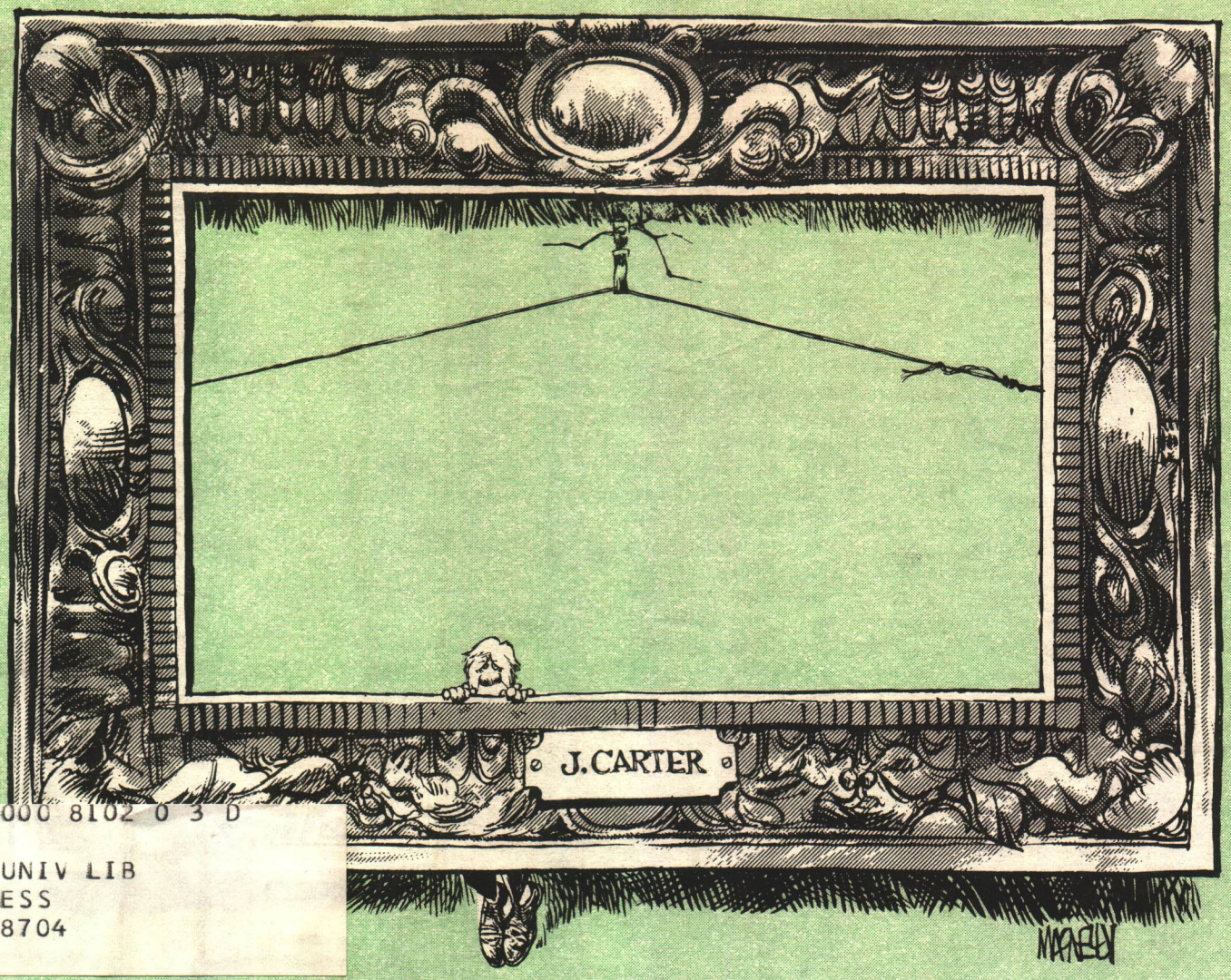
THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR®

VOL. 14 FEBRUARY 1981 NO. 2

Jude Wanniski: Supply-Side Foreign Policy

Ralph McInerny: Graham Greene's Metamorphosis

Official White House Portrait
James Earl Carter, Jr. (1977-1981)



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THE CONTINUING CRISIS

• December through to January 8, and out in California, full of brag and bounce, Ronald Reagan & Associates are donning their makeup and their costumes, going through final rehearsals, and preparing for the great flight into Washington for their first four-year stand.

• In Washington the sense of anticipation grows. Everyone is on Ron's side. But when he appointed James Watt to head the Department of the Interior, there were some hem-hems from the flower-sniffers. They had been willing to give Mr. Reagan the benefit of the doubt, but bringing in a man who actually disagrees with them—well that is going too far. The sham will be repeated many times. The cultural abyss between Ronald Reagan and the energumens of regulation, environmentalism, feminism, and all the other enthusiasms of the New Age is unavoidable. It will be only a matter of time before they are howling for his scalp.

• Christmas was celebrated across the length and breadth of the Republic, and once again the doughty American Civil Liberties Union was helpless to do anything about it. "Merry Christmas" resounded repeatedly from the leathery lungs of smug believers; but non-believers were left with no legal recourse other than to hunker down, saddened by the knowledge that their tax dollars were being expended to decorate public buildings with such seasoned brummagem as Santa's smirker, Christmas bells, and, in some instances, *angels*. Nonetheless, there were hopeful omens. In Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, police are, at this moment, hunting down a "surly" Santa Claus who took $200 from the Shrewsbury Citgo station, long a local cultural center. Shrewsbury's Christians consoled themselves, noting that the beefy thief used no weapon. But a police spokesman was quick to point out that "he used real tough language"—notwithstanding the fact that the attendant was a lady. "We'll get this guy," the cop pledged, filling many minds with delightful scenes of a manacled Santa before the cameras, a police lineup abounding with Santas, Santa in the dock!

• And there was more. In London, England, a Santa Claus who had been hysterically passing out chocolate from a sleigh drawn by two miniature Shetland ponies became such a nuisance that Magistrate Mrs. Evelyn Davies banned him from central London until mid-January, and for good reason. According to Ohio State University Professor Steven Jones, Santa Claus is actually a "sexist fertility symbol" whose "male figure is a fairly common sexist theme in folklore through which male characters usurp female roles." No wonder an eight-foot effigy of the accursed man was hung by the neck in Burlington, North Carolina.

• On December 3, former "Weatherman" leader Miss Bernardine Dohrn, 38, surrendered to authorities, still spouting revolutionary bombast and baloney. But time exacts its price. "Once she was beautiful," the *New York Post* declared. "But now," the world's greatest newspaper went on, "the cheeks have turned to chalk, the face has lined with age, the eyes sit above deep bags. The lips that once spoke hate are pinched and suspended from jowls. The once pert and pretty figure has sagged. But the hate is still there." Miss Zona Sage, 35, director of Berkeley, California's rent stabilization board, was arrested on suspicion of using spray paint to adorn the side of a liquor store with the slogans "Amazon Liberation Army" and "Smash Pornophy (sic)." Fire fighters in DuQuoin, Illinois, were called to the home of Mr. Robert Krummerich where a water bed had burst into flames, and on December 15, Mr. Dave Winfield was given $25 million to play baseball.

• In Hayward, California, Superior Court Judge John Purchio awarded $133,000 to a woman after a series of foot operations left her with a big toe sticking straight up. The Sam Reiter family of Holbrook, New York, is suing its neighbors, the Jerry Fishbeins, for $8 million, after receiving crank letters from the Fishbeins such as one allegedly written by a fictitious and apparently semi-literate doctor: "Dear Mrs. Reiter, As your body is slowly being eaten away by cancer and you will slowly get thinner, and become mentally incompotent (sic) like you shall become. . . we would hereby request, instead of being buried in the ground, we would like to use your remains for scientific evaluation in the continuing research of terminal cancer." The Fishbeins and Reiters have had a long-standing disagreement. In Chicago, Mr. Medhi Farrokhi [Iranian] has been sentenced to six years in prison for raping a nineteen-year-old mentally retarded woman. Claiming unfamiliarity with American customs and limited facility with English, Mr. Farrokhi will appeal his conviction to the Illinois Supreme Court.

• Mr. Mark David Chapman, the fanatical Beatles fan who actually murdered John Lennon on December 8, made the anticipated not-guilty plea on the grounds of insanity, though it is still uncertain precisely what Beatles records will be used in his defense. Doubtless we all have our favorites. In Los Angeles, a drunk who had been ordered by police to walk home due to his sozzled condition, was seriously injured when run over by a riderless motorcycle. In Bonners Ferry, Idaho, Mr. Nick Hill, 21, is recuperating after having a small fetus removed from his brain, where it had been, unbeknownst to Hill, all his life. Any suspicions that the fetus was the unwanted consequence of unusual sexual conduct were allayed by doctors who speculated that the fetus might actually have been an undeveloped twin. Mice whose parents have been alcoholics should not drink, according to researchers at the University of Colorado. Professors Gene Erwin and Gerald McClearn have found that hereditary factors definitely influence the normal mouse's dependency on spiritous drink.

• The anti-social habits of pet lovers continue to make headlines. In Minneapolis, Mr. William Reed and Mr. William Warren suffered multiple stab wounds during a New Year's eve fracas over a puppy, its ownership, and precisely who had hurled it from a third-story window. A Washington, D.C. teenager cremated herself upon hearing of her dog's death, and on December 21, Iran demanded $24 billion for the return of our State Department personnel. On December 24, President-elect Reagan called the Iranians "criminals" and "kidnappers," and on December 26, President Carter broke his collar bone.

• The son of Senator Edward Kennedy was arrested for possession of marijuana. Mr. Robert Fox of Howell, New Jersey, who married a 34-year-old transsexual after a "whirlwind courtship" two months ago, murdered her after discovering evidence of various infidelities amongst her private effects. Soviet-Polish relations warmed and cooled continuously throughout the month, and Mr. Richard L. Gates, an illiterate tailor from Philadelphia, surrendered at least six hostages in Lafayette Hill, Pennsylvania, when authorities promised that they would teach him to read.

• Finally, sulking, saintly, and imbecilic, the Wonderboy of 1976 prepared to abscond to his refuge deep in America's peanut country. Had anyone predicted such a debacle four years ago? Only the readers of *The American Spectator* know for sure, and perhaps they will take heart in hearing that since then our circulation has increased from 13,500 to 31,000, a 130-percent increase. Fittingly, on December 31, the *Washington Post* listed *The American Spectator* as Washington's "in" magazine, replacing the *New Republic*. —*RET*

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EDITORIAL

JIMMY: AT THE END OF THE REVELS

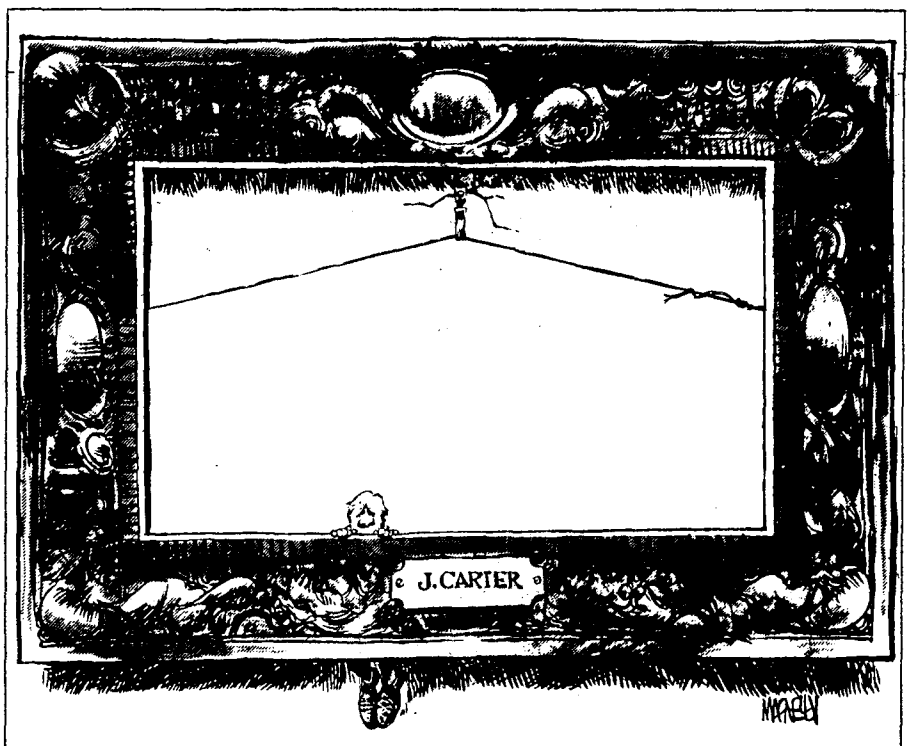
by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

You hold in your hands the ultimate souvenir of the Carter Administration, the official presidential portrait of James Earl Carter, Jr., commissioned by *The American Spectator,* executed by Jeff MacNelly, and donated by us to the government of the United States, the sole proviso being that the government accord it exposure and visibility commensurate with that which the French government has given the *Mona Lisa.* Go ahead, take another look. Does MacNelly not capture the full puniness of the Carter era? Admittedly, commissioning a Pulitzer-Prize-winning cartoonist for a presidential portrait is without precedent, but then having a cartoon presidency is without precedent also.

When the Wonderboy arrived in Washington four years ago, full of solemn oaths and clever plans for establishing the New Jerusalem right there on the ruins of Gomorrah, one of his first acts of genius was to end the government's lavish policy of commissioning cabinet members' portraits. Thus with this one audacious stroke his administration came several thousand dollars closer to getting control of what was then a $358,000,000,000 budget. There was grumbling, but the great helmsman of the populist whim-wham stuck courageously to his guns; no portraits. Here should have been a presentiment of all the loony episodes that lay ahead. Let history record, however, that the giants of the press corps sensed nothing amiss. They called him brilliant. He was the political genius of 1976. Anon, with the plaster falling from the walls, the chickens refusing to lay, and the cow gone plumb dry, Jimmy consulted Rafshoon. In the fullness of time he appeared at a press conference, his hair now parted on the left. This time the journalists called him enigmatic. As late as early 1980 they called him enigmatic! By then he had used a canoe paddle to fight off a sea-going rabbit. He had dangled Baptist salvation before the aghast Park Chung Hee, South Korea's Buddhist dictator. At the Venice summit he visited strange monks. He grew. He experienced. In fact, in the first three years of his presidency, Jimmy personally experienced things that Grant, deep in the sauce, had only dreamt of.

American foreign policy became a ribald joke before the world. American domestic policy wheezed and groaned as more and more flapdoodle was piled onto it. Galoots and wretches manned our government. Our culture seemed to proclaim most proudly the worst of fourth-rate vulgar. Europeans long given to patronizing us for our putative callowness suddenly fell silent. Was that the sound of Soviet tanks revving up off to the east or was it just a growl from the Politburo? By 1980 things had grown serious.

Jimmy Carter was the worst president in American history. Those who find that judgment harsh are quite simply without an historic sense, without judgment, and without character. They are in all likelihood the same people who through most of the past four years were moved to sophistry and euphemism while Jimmy grinned and tumbled headlong into the White House china. The same critical standards that they had so recently applied to the Ford administration became mysteriously defunct until it was too late in the farce to matter. Few would admit that Jimmy was an ignoramus. Jimmy had embraced all the idiocy and idiotizing of their subculture, so they sealed their lips. But their subculture had, after twenty years of self-indulgence, grown seedy and whistle-brained. Their subculture was American liberalism. By 1976, it was only a blowsy likeness of its old self.



James Earl Carter, Jr. (1977-1981)
Official White House Portrait

In any assessment of the Carter glory one must also indict the adepts of decrepit liberalism. Lost in their unctuous reveries they proclaimed Jimmy plausible, and by election time 1980 believed that the voters would perceive him as plausible too. Though by practically every measure he appeared a loser, the New Age liberals still believed Jimmy could pull it off. They even believed Jimmy had come out of the last debate unscathed. Does one need any more evidence of their capacity for self-delusion?

By the end of the 1970s this New Age liberalism had become illiberal, irrational, and inhumane. It had become a series of poses assumed by the precious and the opportunistic frantically attempting to stay on top. If there is one key to understanding the preposterous vagaries of the 1970s it is the realization that during that decade celebrity and preferment generally went to those who could accurately calculate the drifts of the Zeitgeist and then intone the emergent solemnities without laughing. Remember the curious exculpation of such louts as John Dean? Would he so readily have been accepted as a "writer" and "commentator" had he remained unrepentant and refused to affect the self-guilt, self-improvement, I-am-better-for-having-been-a-creep soap opera that accompanied his conscience-raising? Remember the great leaps into *Jugendkultur* of such highbrows as Galbraith and Schlesinger? Self-respect, integrity, dignity, and intelligence had very little to do with making it in the 1970s. All depended on cunning and a prevenient nose for the fashionable pose. A shapeless dynamic like this was bound to give great leverage to the balmy. Doubtless there is justice in this. After all should not lunatics, too, influence our civilization? Think of the influence of the rich and the powerful. Reasoning like this was almost irrefutable in the late 1970s.

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This was to be Jimmy's hour. Here was a scamp mountebank from jerkwater America whose knowledge of government and of history was somewhere between that of the bathroom attendant at "21" and that of a modestly educated welfare queen. Yet so superficial and juvenile had the bromides of New Age liberalism become that the scamp could intone them fluently. So degenerate had the New Age liberals become that the mere sounds of these bromides pacified them. A peanut farmer, who had lied his way to the governorship of Georgia playing the Kluxian toot one minute and Negro blues the next, now had confected a song and dance incorporating Reinhold Niebuhr, Karl Barth, Bob Dylan, Martin Luther King, the Allman Brothers, and a dozen or so liberal aphrodisiacs. He wore dungarees, pole-climbing boots, and work shirts. He carried an empty suitcase. He smiled with a grim determination that sent small children leaping for cover. Yet the intelligentsia of liberalism warmed to him. They gambled that any fool could be a successful president so long as he was receptive to their foolishness.

This was the New Age liberals' most reckless gamble since Watergate, when they wagered that a little *coup d'état* could be indulged in with impunity. As the Wonderboy walked down Pennsylvania Avenue on Inauguration Day noble visions flickered in their minds. Then he held his inspirational telephone call-ins, his fireside chat, his town meetings. He was making all the right moves, as they say. Of course Jimmy too was gambling. An essentially vacuous Snopes, he had listened intently to the political debates and watched all the demonstrations. He wagered that the New Politics, as it was called, was most likely to keep him loved and respected and in a house filled with clean sheets.

Yet in the end, as the sap at the helm directed the ship of state off the reef and into the next maelstrom, the liberals turned queazy, held their sides, and prayed for Dramamine. Finally they leapt from the sinking ship, abandoning Jimmy much as they had abandoned LBJ over a decade before. Was Jimmy a true blue liberal of the New Age? Of

(*continued on page 36*)

CAPITOL IDEAS

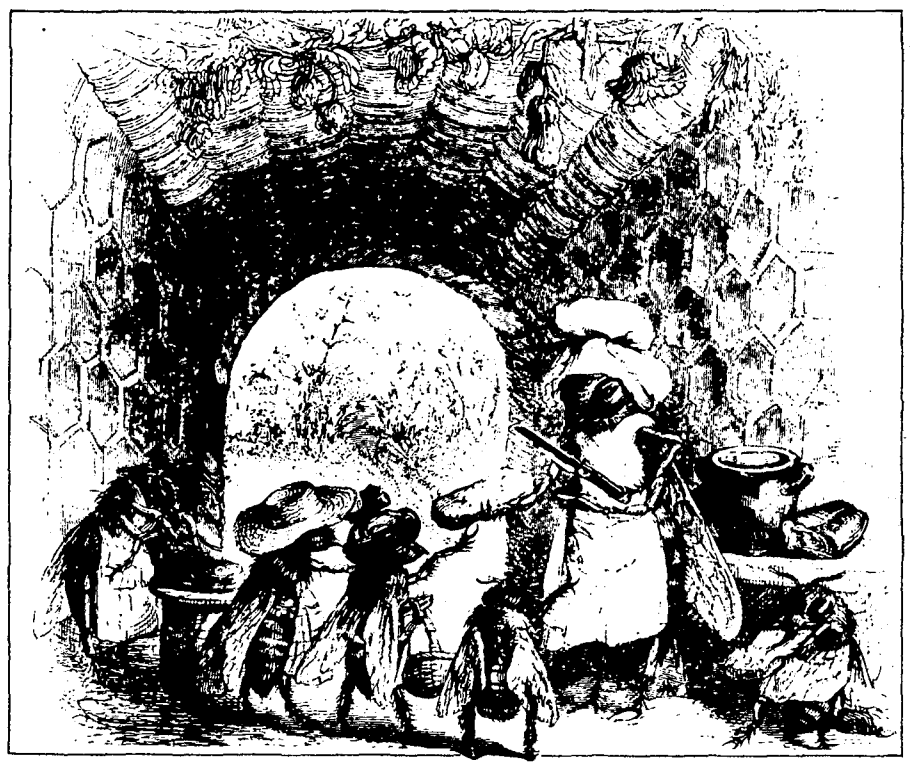
THE APICULTURE OF SOCIALISM

by Tom Bethell

George Gilder's new book *Wealth and Poverty,* the most original work of economics to be published in many a year, contains so many texts worthy of a sermon that your preacher hardly knows where to begin. Therefore he will begin at the beginning, with the first two sentences of the book: "The most important event in the recent history of ideas is the demise of the socialist dream. Dreams always die when they come true, and fifty years of socialist reality, in every partial and plenary form, leaves little room for idealistic reverie."

Gilder incidentally does not elaborate on this theme. The remainder of his book is about capitalism, whose "failure to win a corresponding triumph" is the "second most important event of the recent era." Gilder's goal is to retrieve the laurels for capitalism, establishing that it is based on morality rather than on the more frequently acknowledged self-interest ("capitalism begins with giving . . . ").

But it is the alleged death of socialism that I want to discuss here. I hate to disagree with Gilder's very first sentence, but I confess to a less sanguine view of the matter. He is of course correct to say that socialism has been almost completely discredited in practice, which turns out to consist of labor camps in the Gulag, governments guarded by troops and tanks, four-to-six hour harangues by the maximum leader, queues and curfews, military economics, central planning perennially spoiled by "bad weather," coercions, confessions, and the never-ending suspicion that one's neighbors and children are moonlighting for the secret police.



Unfortunately, however, all this has not resulted in the abandonment of the socialist dream. Socialists have simply started to call themselves something else—"social democrats," for example, or, in America, "liberals." The label-change has proved necessary because enough people now know what socialism brings in its wake to make it almost impossible for the plain, unvarnished socialist to get himself elected. This is the big change that has overcome the politics of the western democracies since 1945. But the socialists are still there, lurking in every nook and cranny of the body politic. And they still dream of the New Dawn; their agenda has simply been dressed up in new rhetoric.

In America we are led to suppose that socialists scarcely exist at all beyond a small but doughty band led by J.K. Galbraith, Michael Harrington, Gloria Steinem, and Rep. Ron Dellums. Does anyone believe that? When you consider that in the European democracies socialists number about 30 percent of the electorate, it is hard to accept that things are so very different here. The truth is of course that there are millions of non-avowed socialists in

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator*'s Washington editor and a Washington editor of* Harper's.

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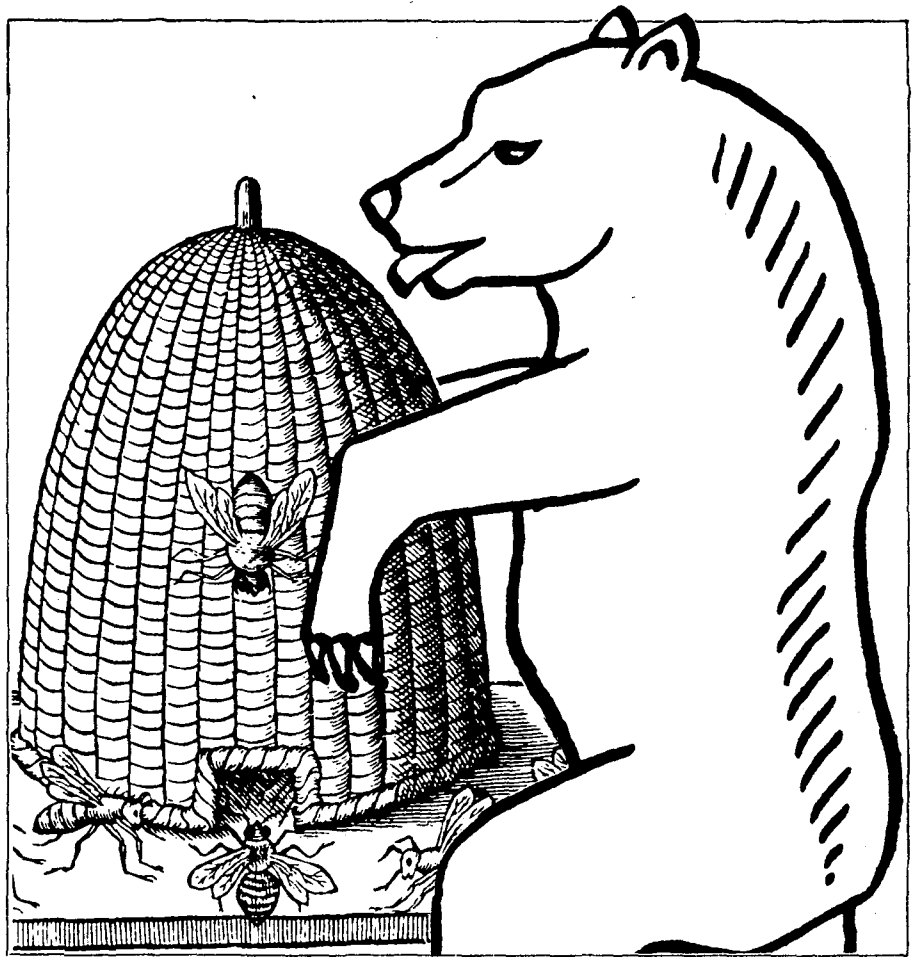
the United States—more than ever recently because in the past 15 years the conditions that give rise to the development of socialism have flourished. But because left-wingers never call themselves left-wingers, no one else does either. Since coming to Washington I have never once seen a congressman or a senator described in the *Washington Post* or the *New York Times* as "the left-wing representative from . . . " But there have been plenty of "right-wingers." Does anyone believe that the U.S. Senate has tilted to the right in recent years? The fellow-travelling Institute for Policy Studies is described by the *Washington Post* as a "liberal think tank," and by the *Times* as an "independent research organization."

Left-wing individuals and organizations have disguised their agenda by adopting a new system of communication—one in which the crude old formulas such as "state ownership of the means of production" never appear. Joe Sobran, the *National Review* editor and columnist, has likened the contemporary system of socialist communication to a beehive. Bees in a hive don't "talk" to one another, but they do have an effective system of communication, and they all work toward a common goal, different bees performing different functions. "There is no need to posit an overarching conspiracy," Sobran wrote recently. "The world collectivist movement goes forward. None of its constituent parts—Communist, socialist, liberal—runs the whole thing; they don't even consciously cooperate, for the most part." But they manage never to sting one another.

The translation of hive talk and hive signals into plain English is one of the most challenging tasks confronting the independent journalist today. I add the qualifier "independent" because so many journalists have put themselves at the disposal of the hive. The *New York Times* has steadily degenerated into an important cell of the hive, in recent years adopting positions indistinguishable from the *Village Voice.*

In order to translate the language of the hive, it helps to determine the purpose of socialism, but this turns out to be oddly elusive, as C.A.R. Crosland shows in his interesting book *The Future of Socialism* (second edition, 1963). "What is socialism now about?" Crosland asks, having found that "no single constant and consistent body of socialist doctrine exists." He quotes R.H. Tawney, socialism's shining saint and bore, to the effect that "socialism is a word the connotation of which varies, not only from generation to generation, but from decade to decade."

Igor Shafarevich, the Soviet mathematician who was compelled to circulate his thoughts on socialism in *samizdat,* has few illusions on the subject and in the end, one suspects, comes closer to the heart of the matter than the deluded alumni of Rugby and Winchester. (Will someone please tell me why the most interesting ideas of the 1970s seem to have begun life in furtive, hand-to-hand circulation inside the Soviet Union? Is it time we heard the crack of the censor's whip here, too? The First Amendment has done wonders for quantity, less for quality.)



In his remarkable book *The Socialist Phenomenon,* recently translated into English (Harper & Row, 1980), Shafarevich points out that a crucial goal of socialism is the breaking down of religious, family, and property ties and loyalties. Thus the contemporary socialist hive operating in the West is a kind of a receiving station for defectors: defectors from instilled beliefs, home truths, native wisdom, God, country, flag, and honor. In a brilliant aperçu, Sobran has observed that those defectors who "pupate" into the hive experience their metamorphosis into the worker bees of collectivism as "liberation." The betrayal of conscience that is entailed by such a change then shamelessly masquerades as a triumph of conscience.

Renegade nuns show us the hive in action as vividly as anything. When you read Kenneth Woodward in *Newsweek* describing the Maryknoll nuns as "a socially committed religious community, dedicated to solidarity with the Third World's poor," then you hear the humming of the hive. Woodward slips revealingly, and no doubt unconsciously, into the Marxist mode when he uses the word "solidarity." But there is something important that he *doesn't* tell us about radical nuns, one of the prime horrors of our time: They have stopped believing in God and in an afterlife. In the process they have transformed themselves into bulldike socialists who will spend the rest of their lives attempting to destroy in others the loyalties and beliefs that they destroyed in themselves.

You might ask why renegade nuns don't simply leave the church if they have stopped believing in God. Because in undergoing their transformation they have learned one fundamental truth: Religions can only be attacked from within. External assault merely strengthens the resolve of believers. That is why all the news media assaults on Reverend Falwell and his Moral Majority will come to naught. But when you hear a left-wing nun say: "Ten years ago I nearly left the order, but then I saw the changes taking place in the church and I decided to stay," you should know, as the bees in the hive know, that it "translates" into something a good deal more sinister than it sounds on the surface. Demolition is afoot.

The collectivist hive is automatically anti-American because America, more than any other country, has stood squarely in the path of the steady worldwide movement toward socialism that the hive labors endlessly to bring about. Therefore the Third World—the hive's term for the collection of nations whose governments it has satellized in the past 25 years or so—is violently anti-American and will remain so indefinitely.

Some Americans internally defected from their own country as a result of the Vietnam War. They didn't go to Russia but they joined the hive. In particular, this applies to people who refused to fight for their country and subsequently became eager to persuade themselves and others that they were motivated by something other than cowardice. They were thereby compelled to adopt a low opinion of America and a benign view of Communism as justifications for their unpatriotic behavior. In the process they became willing workers in the hive, only too willing to accuse their country of racism, sexism, and imperialism. Jimmy Carter's reference to our "inordinate fear of Communism" was, well . . . nectar. Dr. Johnson's observation that patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel was forever on their tongues.

The queen bee lives in the Kremlin. The Soviet Union has of course become something of an embarrassment to collectivists but it must nevertheless be succored and supported, for without the Soviet Union the hive would collapse. The hive's job in America is to see to it that, if the Soviet Union does something too blatantly aggressive (e.g. invades Poland), there is a minimal response by the West. We will be sternly warned not to "overreact."

Hive signals come through unmistakably in Anthony Lewis's column in the *New York Times.* Here is a paragraph from his December 15 column, "Hard Choices in Poland":

> If the Soviets move, how should the West respond? The first necessity is not to take this particular step or that but, whatever we do, to act together. Marshall Shulman, until recently the adviser on Soviet Affairs to the Secretary of State, put it on "Meet the Press" today that the aim must be "not to let any daylight show between the United States and its European allies."

That's hive talk. Translated it reads: Give Helmut Schmidt veto power over anything we may decide to do. □

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Jude Wanniski

A SUPPLY-SIDE FOREIGN POLICY

Bringing classical economic reforms to rampant global inflation.

The "fundamental principles" of taxation, as he called them, were laid out by Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon in a 1924 statement. It is a classic as well as a classical statement, one that now lies at the heart of domestic "Reaganomics." Mellon said, in part:

> The problem of the Government is to fix rates which will bring in a maximum amount of revenue to the Treasury and at the same time bear not too heavily on the taxpayer or on business enterprises. A sound tax policy must take into consideration three factors. It must produce sufficient revenue for the Government; it must lessen, so far as possible, the burden of taxation on those least able to bear it; and it must also remove those influences which might retard the continued steady development of business and industry on which, in the last analysis, so much of our prosperity depends. Furthermore, a permanent tax system should be designed not merely for one or two years nor for the effect it may have on any given class of taxpayers, but should be worked out with regard to conditions over a long period and with a view to its ultimate effect on the prosperity of the country as a whole. . . .
>
> I have never viewed taxation as a means of rewarding one class of taxpayers or punishing another. If such a point of view ever controls our public policy, the traditions of freedom, justice and equality of opportunity, which are the distinguishing characteristics of our American civilization, will have disappeared and in their place we shall have class legislation with all its attendant evils. The man who seeks to perpetuate prejudice and class hatred is doing America an ill service. In attempting to promote or defeat legislation by arraying one class of taxpayers against another, he shows a complete misconception of those principles of equality on which the country was founded. Any man of energy and initative in this country can get what he wants out of life. But when that initiative is crippled by legislation or by a tax system which denies him the right to receive a reasonable share of his earnings, then he will no longer exert himself and the country will be deprived of the energy on which its continued greatness depends.

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President-elect Reagan essentially campaigned on these principles and has committed himself to them. The size of his victory November 4, along with Republican control of the Senate and expanded influence in the House, point toward domestic tax reforms in 1981 along classical lines. The objective of the supply-siders is a tax bill that ends the distinction between "earned" and "unearned" income, bringing the top rate on saving-and-investment income to 50 percent from 70 percent; the Kemp-Roth reductions would proceed from that level. The maximum tax rate on all income, then, would be 45 percent in 1981, which means the effective rate of tax on capital gains would be roughly 15 percent. Such change would have substantial effects on national productivity, lift the value of financial assets, and provide a solid foundation for domestic economic gains through the Reagan years.

Because the United States is such a large part of the world economy, domestic economic reforms that boost productivity will have beneficial effects around the world—in the same way that economic growth in California following passage of Proposition 13 in 1978 had buoyant effects on the rest of the United States. But the reverse is also true. If the rest of the world economy follows perverse economic principles—moving up the Laffer Curve even as we head down—it will transmit those negative effects to the United States, offsetting our gains and perhaps swamping them. On November 24, for example, Margaret Thatcher provided yet another shock to the U.K. economy by hoisting tax rates on North Sea oil and a variety of consumer goods, thereby decreasing the efficiency of the world economy. The ripple effects were felt immediately in the United States through the financial markets.

For its own success and that of the nation, then, the Reagan administration cannot act as if movement toward correct economic policies at home will be sufficient, perhaps believing that the U.S. *example* will eventually be transmitted globally. After all, if the U.S. economy is swamped by international economic distress in 1981, the *example* itself will be submerged and discredited, here as well as abroad. This is why it is so critical that a new president, at the very outset of his administration, shape a foreign policy that has as a key ingredient the transmission of classical economic reforms to the rest of the world.

The most immediate and pressing threat to the world economy which the Reagan administration must face is the Third World debt to the international banks, a debt that now exceeds $300 billion. On the face of it, there is no prospect that this debt can be repaid, and because the amount exceeds by many, many times the amount of capital in the international banks, these banks would be technically bankrupt were it not for continued currency inflation. Indeed, lacking any other solution, the banks have a profound vested interest in global inflation. It preserves the illusion of

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solvency even as the debt mushrooms. Where once the international banks were ardent exponents of a gold standard for the dollar, which maintained a reliable unit of account between debtors and creditors, they led the way in the early 1970s in urging a "floating" dollar. Citibank, the biggest of them all, was the most ardent in pushing for an end to the dollar/gold link, but Chase Manhattan and the Bank of America were not far behind. New money to roll over Third World debt could be created through deposits in the Eurodollar market. The inflation brought some relief to debtors, but not for long. It also hurt holders of dollar assets, most particularly the OPEC nations. In an attempt to keep even with inflation, they hiked the dollar price of oil. This only meant new private money creation by the banks was necessary, triggering another round of inflation.

The Third World debt mushrooms for the most part because of compounding finance charges, not because of a net increase in actual imports of resources. Imagine buying a television set in 1955 and paying for it over 30 years and you have a picture of the fix the Third World is in. The TV set (the original development project) has long ago been scrapped, but the finance charges go on and on. As a result of rising interest charges at the end of 1979, Third World debt service obligations rose by $7.5 billion.

The International Monetary Fund, founded in 1945 to deal with international balance-of-payment problems, must not only find a way to pay for the oil that goes to the developing nations, it must also scramble for the funds to refinance existing debt. Countries such as Brazil, which owes $13.6 billion to U.S. banks, are finding they are unable to reduce their debt, which reflects on the low price-earnings multiples of the international banks like Citicorp (which had $4.2 billion staked in Brazil in 1979). If this condition spreads, with countries finding they cannot even meet interest charges because of climbing interest rates, there would of course be a major crisis.

For several decades, U.S. foreign policy has been wagged by this tail of global debt. The IMF and the World Bank are run by and for the money-center banks, the aim being the aversion of international financial collapse and their own bankruptcies. The World Bank's objective is to squeeze the U.S. taxpayer for resources to send to the Third World, with the avowed aim of helping nations develop so their expanding tax bases can support their debt service. The IMF's pattern is to squeeze the taxpayers of the recipient nations, via IMF imposed "austerity plans," to collect the revenues needed to meet international debt obligations. The net result of this one-two punch has been the exact opposite of the intended aim, pushing developing nations up the Laffer Curve and inviting civil strife, revolutions, terrorism, and authoritarian takeovers of one kind or another.

The U.S. State Department and a long string of Secretaries of State have displayed little or no interest in these economic causes of global unrest (Kissinger even boasted of his lack of interest or knowledge of economics). Foreign policy has been a dustpan-and-brush operation, with American diplomats expected to make the best of a worsening situation by playing Metternichian power-bloc politics. The framework for foreign policy is set by the members of the Council on Foreign Relations and, in the 1970s, the Trilateral Commission, who assume, as a given, that the United States is a declining power. And both the CFR and the TLC (founded by Chase's David Rockefeller) are dominated directly or indirectly by the impact of international debt on global commerce. This is quite understandable. The problem is that these eastern elites have the wrong development model.

The development model the United States urged on the rest of the world after 1945 was a modern one, borne of the Great Depression. It focused on the need of governments to get control of "aggregate demand," or consumer demand. If a nation's masses consumed all its production, there would be no surplus, no capital, remaining for investment in "infrastructure." Infrastructure—roads, waterworks, power plants, docks, even a steel industry —was advanced as the key to development, through its ability to increase economic efficiency.

Policy that flowed from this theory took two forms. The poor nations were urged to impose steeply progressive taxes on their people in order to amass revenues to finance infrastructure. Project loans also were made to the poor nations, the loans to be paid back with the tax revenues that would result from economic development. In most cases, the policy financed infrastructure built with material and expertise from the industrial countries. Then and now, development was seen as stemming from physical capital, from "things." The poor nations were left with debt and tax burdens. Entrepreneurial activity was smothered by confiscatory tax rates. And because the infrastructure did not foster growth, tax revenues did not increase. The revenues that were received had to be applied to debt service, while costs of financing general government were taken care of by the printing press and inflation, further discouraging indigenous initiative.

This, of course, was not the developmental path the United States or other

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industrial nations followed. The classical formula focused on human capital, on "people," not "things." Policy did not focus on consumer demand for things, but on encouragement of individuals to supply their talents and energies to greater production. And if money would hold its value, people would be encouraged to save and invest greater shares of their production—the government would not have to tax it away and invest it for them. In other words, the U.S. economy was built in an environment conducive to individual enterprise: low rates of taxation, minimal central planning, and hard money. Yet this is exactly the model that our modern economic theorists and policymakers discourage the emerging nations from following. It is exactly the model that should now serve as the economic backbone of American foreign policy.

When A.W. Clausen, president of the Bank of America, was nominated last October 31 by President Carter to succeed Robert McNamara as president of the World Bank, the news shocked the supply-side movement. It was, of course, known that McNamara would be ending his 12-year tenure late next spring, which left supply-siders with high hopes for a Reagan-appointed successor who would replace the bankrupt development model with a classical one. And there would be plenty of time for Reagan to ruminate on the choice. President Carter, it was felt, would not dare send up a nomination or the Republicans would howl as wildly as they did in 1968 when President Johnson appointed Abe Fortas to the Supreme Court on the threshold of the elections. The surprise was that Carter would gain Reagan's approval of a "non-political" appointment on the transparently bogus grounds that quick action was necessary to keep the Europeans from snatching the job. The real reason, no doubt, was that the World Bank would try to get another $3.2 billion out of the Congress in the current lame-duck session, that Republicans were not supporting the legislation, and that a Reagan-approved A.W. Clausen might be able to lobby it through. Insofar as they have been part of the IMF-World Bank one-two punch, Clausen and the Bank of America have been part of the problem, with $8.2 billion in debt exposure in the Third World.

The deal was arranged with George Shultz, former Nixon Treasury Secretary, who is now executive vice president of the Bechtel Corp., the leading multi-national packager of Third World infrastructure. Bechtel is virtually an extension, the operating arm of the international banks. Shultz, a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, was the establishmentarian's candidate for Secretary of State until he withdrew his name from consideration. Shultz got close to Reagan this year through Caspar Weinberger, who was Reagan's finance director in the Sacramento days, who followed Shultz as OMB director in the Nixon years, and who until his nomination as Reagan's Secretary of Defense was also an executive at Bechtel. Shultz may not have been acceptable as Secretary of State because he disagrees with Reagan's position in Israel, a not unreasonable posture for a Bechtel executive.

Yet all these interlocking connections in the Eastern Establishment count for something, a distinct way of thinking about the world. When the World Bank request for $3.2 billion surfaced in the lame-duck session, with a push from the lame-duck president, it was backed by Clausen and Shultz. The only reason it stalled was because of the opposition of Richard V. Allen, Reagan's foreign-policy adviser, who said he did not want to commit the President-elect to a major foreign-aid package in advance of his administration. Allen, slated to become Reagan's National Security adviser, was Henry Kissinger's deputy at NSC in 1969 until the two had a falling out, and Allen went on to become deputy to the White House Council on International Economic Policy. Not coincidentally, he now believes that foreign economic policy is the most underdeveloped aspect of U.S. foreign policy. He is, in fact, the pivotal figure in putting economics into the backbone of a Reagan foreign policy. As long as he retains the confidence of Reagan, which seems likely, we can expect his innovative influence to shift the policy framework away from that of the Council on Foreign Relations and Trilateral Commission to pro-growth strategies, which will benefit the international banks in spite of themselves. The key appointment will be the Undersecretary of State for Economic Affairs, a post now held by neo-Keynesian Richard Cooper, formerly of Yale. If it goes to a supply-sider in the Reagan administration, the focus of American foreign policy would shift perceptibly, toward global economic advance and away from Club of Rome assumptions about dwindling resources.

The three pivotal test cases of foreign policy likely will be Jamaica in the Western hemisphere, Turkey in Europe, and Israel in the Middle East. The three are economic basket cases as a result of either systematic doses of IMF austerity schemes, self-inflicted wounds, or a combination of both. Each has had its private, entrepreneurial sector decimated by currency devaluations, savage inflation, and steep tax progressivity, which means they are testing the upper limits of the Laffer Curve. Personal income tax rates in each are on the order of 60 percent encountered at $7,000 to $10,000. Commerce flourishes only in the subterranean economy, which pays no taxes. The new Prime Minister of Jamaica,

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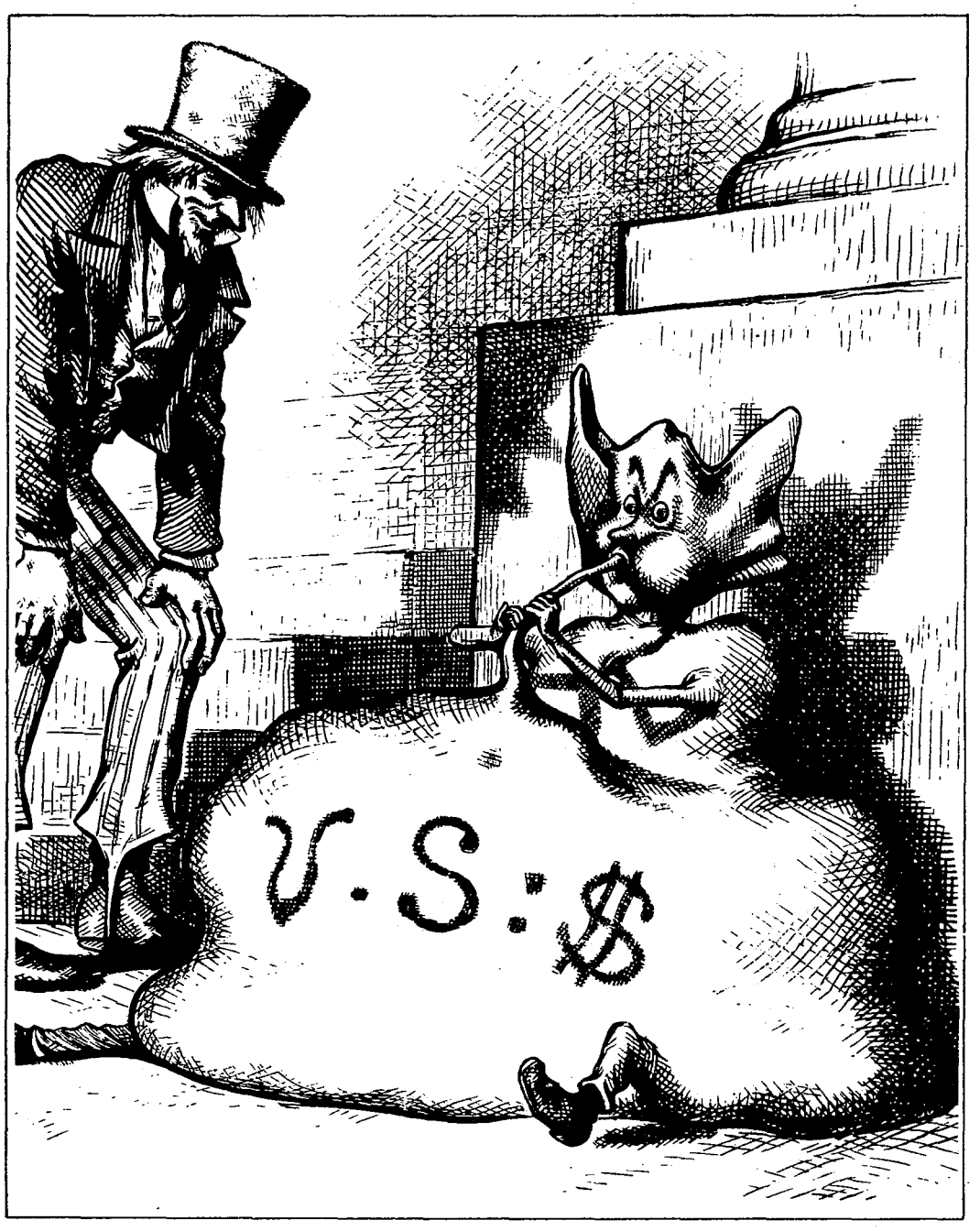
Edward P.G. Seaga, told "Face the Nation" on November 24 that he is forced, more than ever, to count on the production and export of marijuana to bolster the economy. "In the last few months in particular," he said, "it has almost been the lifeline economically in providing dollars and foreign exchange which the Bank of Jamaica could not provide." Israel's national fabric is also being shredded by a 125 percent inflation rate and austerity-induced economic stagnation, and successive finance ministers can only think of adding new taxes to curtail "excessive consumer demand" (although Arthur Laffer has been invited to visit the country in January to offer counsel). Turkey, a NATO ally, is in similar, desperate shape after a decade of IMF shoves up the Laffer Curve, and urban terrorism is being held in check, temporarily, by authoritarian rule since the military takeover of last September.

After a decade of rampant global inflation, income tax rates around the world have risen sharply, tax progressions being almost universal outside the Communist bloc. Especially in the Third World, the effect has been the collapse of private commerce beyond the level of cottage industry. Private enterprise cannot compete with public enterprise when returns on private capital are confiscated by taxes that the public enterprise does not face. The citizenry is driven toward public solutions when private solutions are closed off. It would be surprising *not* to find the socialist impulse flowering in the Third World. Where national leadership has ignored or rejected the counsel of the international financial institutions, the opposite has been the result. Tax reform, on the Mellon-Coolidge principle that "high tax rates defeat their own purpose," has brought positive results to Egypt, Chile, and Puerto Rico in recent years. Fidel Castro singled out these nations for special censure at his Havana Third World conference in 1979. He also blasted a China that is shedding the Maoist, gang-of-four goal of *equality of result* (where reward is the same regardless of individual effort) in favor of economic incentives to individual enterprise.

India experimented with sharp cuts in unproductive income tax rates in 1976, with spectacularly successful results, but there was no follow through. Sri Lanka did the same, experiencing a buoyancy in its economy and a spark of private enterprise that endures. Uruguay, at the point of economic and political collapse in the early 1970s, eliminated its income tax entirely—it was producing almost no revenue anyway. It is now flourishing.



Eventually, these kinds of success stories will spread, as one nation after another goes to the brink of revolution. The message could be spread rapidly, though, by a Reagan foreign policy that encourages the IMF and World Bank to alter their development model and galvanizes the foreign diplomatic service to that end. Little resistance would be encountered if the *quid pro quo* for economic assistance is growth rather than austerity, and the seemingly intractable U.S. foreign service might find it attractive to promote populist reforms instead of power-bloc politics.

The international bankers, confounded by the spiraling Third World debt that threatens to engulf them, simply have not been thinking big enough. Worldwide tax reform would free the energies of the people of the Third World in ways that would make it possible for them to eventually pay down their debts. The big banks, though, would not even have to wait that long to get relief. If the savings pool in the West were enlarged, Third World debt would rest more easily on the books. This could be accomplished only by an end to the Western inflation that discourages citizens of the West from contributing to the global savings pool. U.S. monetary reform is the answer here, again along classical lines, moving toward a gold standard with intermediate steps in 1981 that avoid a deflation which the banks justifiably fear would bankrupt them. Admittedly, there is little talk of this in the public prints, and Federal Reserve governor Henry Wallich announces confidently that there is "zero chance" of it, but it is in the wind, as well as in the Republican platform and in the back of the mind of the President-elect.

After a shaky start on foreign policy before the election, Reagan is now doing very well. There was cause for concern when he approved the Clausen deal, during the intense pressure of the campaign. And there was cause for concern when the campaign cut loose Richard Allen, after a flurry of stories in the national press raised questions about his business in consulting to foreign corporations. But Allen is back, secure enough to be able to thwart extension of the World Bank-IMF model into the Reagan years. And after seemingly rushing headlong into a restoration of the Nixon-Ford Cabinet, Reagan decided to take his sweet time to assemble his team. This was all to the good, since there will be supply-side representation in his administration. In domestic policy, it will provide him with a foundation for economic revival through his tenure. In foreign policy, it can make all the difference in the world. □

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Carl Gershman

HUBER MATOS AND THE COMING CUBAN REVOLUTION

Our man in Havana is in Caracas.

Cubans opposed to Fidel Castro's rule say that he has made two costly errors during the past year. The first was his decision last April to remove the guards around the Peruvian Embassy in Havana, a move that led 10,000 Cubans to seek political asylum in the embassy compound. Castro had hoped to stage a confrontation between the Peruvians and the refugees as a way of forcing a number of Latin embassies in Havana to stop providing asylum to Cubans wishing to leave the country. But the Peruvians did not turn the refugees away, and the spectacle of thousands of Cubans storming the embassy shouting "Libertad!" proved to be an enormous political embarrassment for Castro.

Castro's second error may be even more costly to his regime in the long run. This was his decision to allow Huber Matos, one of the leaders of the Cuban revolution, to leave the country after completing a 20-year prison sentence. Castro may have calculated that the 60-year-old Matos was a broken man who would live out the rest of his life in seclusion with his family and who, in any event, could do less harm to the regime from exile than as a martyred prisoner and a symbol of unyielding resistance to Communist rule. But here, too, Castro seems to have misplayed his hand.

Since his release from prison a year ago, Matos has busily sought to build a political movement for the liberation of Cuba. He has travelled widely, visiting Cuban communities in the United States, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and Spain. These efforts resulted in the founding of a new organization, *Cuba Independiente y Democratica* (CID), at a congress held in Caracas, Venezuela, over the weekend of October 17-19.

The meeting was scarcely noticed in the United States, but it aroused intense interest in Caracas and in other Latin capitals. The main reason for this is Matos himself, who commands immense respect in the Cuban exile community and throughout Latin America. A former school teacher, Matos joined the revolution against the Batista dictatorship and became, according to the Caracas *Daily Journal,* "the bravest of the guerrillas and their most effective leader." Following the overthrow of Batista, he was put in charge of Camaguey province but resigned his post when it had become clear that Castro intended to impose a Communist dictatorship upon Cuba. On October 21, 1959, two days after his resignation, Matos was arrested and charged with treason. Castro himself was the chief prosecutor at the trial, delivering a seven-hour harangue that was broadcast over the state radio.

Despite numerous appeals for his release and several offers for an exchange of prisoners (the Bolivian government offered to exchange Regis Debray for Matos in 1968), Matos served every day of his 20-year sentence. He spent most of this time in solitary confinement, including a full year in an underground concrete box. He was frequently beaten and in one instance, in 1973, had several ribs broken and his left shoulder severely damaged when he was set upon by a dozen men carrying lengths of cable.

Matos emerged from this ordeal spiritually unscathed. He appears today, in the words of one Venezuelan journalist, as "the model of austere rectitude," a singularly dignified figure who remains a fervent revolutionary. He is hardly the first Cuban exile leader to have accused Castro of imposing a ruthless and economically unworkable totalitarian system in Cuba and of making the country a Soviet colony which now serves Moscow's imperialist interests. But when Matos says that Castro has betrayed the Cuban revolution, his words carry unique moral authority.

Matos' strategy is based first of all on the belief that the anti-Castro movement must have an unmistakable democratic orientation. "We must be clear about our principles," he told the Caracas meeting, "so that everyone will understand that if our struggle succeeds, it will result in nothing but a democratic state." The new organization did not endorse a particular ideology, but its declaration was social democratic in spirit, emphasizing political pluralism, social equality, and a mixed economy with a strong private sector and free trade unions. The declaration also stressed the need for Cuba to gain political independence and to revive its historic and cultural links with Latin America.

The democratic outlook of the new organization was underlined by the choice of Caracas, the capital of Latin America's leading democracy, as the site of the founding congress. (CID will also set up its headquarters in Caracas.) Venezuela's decision to allow the congress to be held on its soil was particularly significant in that its relations with Cuba have recently been strained. Just two weeks before the congress was to have opened, a lower military tribunal in Venezuela acquitted Orlando Bosch and three other Cubans who had been charged with blowing up a Cuban airliner off Barbados in 1976.

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Though the case still had to go before a higher military court, Castro summarily withdrew his ambassador from Caracas and harshly attacked the Venezuelan judicial system. The Venezuelans responded by saying that Castro was hardly in a position to question a court decision in a democracy, and as if to emphasize that they wouldn't be intimidated, they let the Matos congress proceed on schedule. The Venezuelan secret service (DISIP) provided tight security throughout the meeting.

The alignment of the new movement with Latin American democracy was evidenced by the presence at the meeting of representatives of Venezuela's governing Social Christian party (COPEI), the socialist Democratic Action party (AD), and the trade unions. The Costa Rican government also sent a representative. The AD's support is particularly important in that the party has been divided over the Cuban issue. The leftist course of the Socialist International in Latin America, with which the AD is affiliated, has been supported by former Venezuelan President Carlos Andrés Perez. Until now, the Socialist International has not criticized Castro's dictatorship. (At its Congress in Madrid last November, the International actually voted down an amendment calling for political democracy in Cuba.) But with the emergence of Matos as the leader of a Cuban "third force" in the spirit of the AD's founder Romulo Betancourt (who sent personal greetings to the congress), it may not be able to avoid the issue much longer.

Matos is well aware that the struggle to liberate Cuba must ultimately be waged from inside the country. The role of the movement in exile, he feels, is to provide support for those inside and to promote the "ideological reorientation" of the Cuban people. He has already set up a radio station in an unnamed Latin American country and will be broadcasting daily into Cuba. He will also concentrate on publicizing the cases of some 200 *plantados,* Cuban prisoners who, like himself, have refused "re-education" and are subjected to torture and systematic abuse. The centrality in the Cuban struggle of the *plantados,* whom Matos views as the moral heroes of the democratic resistance and the heart of the Cuban nation, was highlighted by the appearance at the congress of Vladimir Bukovsky, the former Soviet prisoner who speaks on behalf of a similar struggle in his own country.

Ever since Matos left Cuba a year ago he has spoken of the deep discontents on the island which make an uprising inevitable if not necessarily imminent. When he visited New York in December 1979, he noted that there was already a widespread "spontaneous" resistance to the regime which had taken the form of industrial sabotage, stealing from the state, draft evasion, pervasive negligence, and lack of discipline. He especially emphasized the discontents among Cubans under 25, who make up more than half the present Cuban population and have no sentimental attachment to a revolution that was made before most of them were born.

Events over the past year have tended to confirm Matos' analysis. Castro himself, in a speech before the National Assembly last December 27, warned that "objective difficulties and errors" by the regime had allowed "the counter-revolution" to make gains within Cuba, particularly among students and intellectuals. The affair at the Peruvian Embassy and the subsequent exodus from the island of over 125,000 Cubans suggested the magnitude of the dissatisfaction with Castro's rule.

Cuba's military involvement in Africa has compounded Castro's problems. Estimates of the number of Cuban soldiers killed in Angola over the last five years run as high as 3,000, which relative to the size of the population exceeds the number of American combat deaths in Vietnam. These casualties should continue to mount since the Cubans show no signs of being able to subdue Jonas Savimbi's UNITA movement which now operates in Angola as a regular fighting force. In order to avoid large public displays of grief that could turn into political demonstrations, the Cuban authorities have staggered the announcement of casualties. But a continuation of Castro's African wars must eventually have serious political consequences. A defeat in Africa could be fatal to the regime.

Not surprisingly, there is growing dissension within the army. Exile-based groups operating clandestinely on the island report that they have had considerable success recruiting disillusioned African war veterans who face bleak economic prospects within Cuba. Matos claims that the regime's distrust of the army is such that the Soviet troops stationed on the island now strictly control the supply of weapons and ammunition to the home forces.

Matos is convinced, in fact, that the primary purpose of these Soviet troops is to enforce the Brezhnev Doctrine in Cuba. He maintains that there are 12,000—not 3,000—Soviet troops in Cuba and that they constitute the chief obstacle to a new Cuban revolution. He has urged the governments of Latin America to make clear to Moscow their vigorous opposition to the use of Soviet troops to suppress an uprising in Cuba. He also expects the United States to deter the Soviets—the only instance in which he is prepared to look to the United States for support. But given Cuba's immense value to Moscow and a world balance of forces that makes intervention feasible, it is hard to imagine that the Soviets would stand by if the survival of the Castro regime were threatened by anti-Communist forces.

Matos cannot be blamed for not having an answer to this problem, since deterring the use of Soviet force in Cuba is ultimately an American responsibility. Remarkably, however, this issue has hardly been discussed here. Last year's debate over the

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Soviet brigade in Cuba focused almost exclusively on whether or not the Soviet forces posed a security threat to this country. But the relevant question remains: In the event of a Soviet attempt to suppress a Cuban uprising, what should our policy be?

The fact that we have not addressed this question may reflect the extent to which many Americans believe Castro's propaganda about the popularity and stability of his regime. It also suggests that despite Castro's challenge to the status quo throughout Central America and the Caribbean, we are not prepared to challenge Moscow's intention to enforce the status quo in Cuba. Our tacit acceptance of this state of affairs may have been the price we paid to get the Soviets to withdraw their missiles from Cuba in 1962. It is now clear that this was a very high price indeed, since the effect was to free Castro at home so that he could engage in foreign adventures.

If Matos is to be believed, it is only a matter of time before the crisis within Cuba comes to a head. If he is correct, then we will not be able indefinitely to evade the issue of whether we will permit a Hungary or a Czechoslovakia to occur 90 miles from our shores. Matos and other opponents of Castro frequently make the point that Moscow can't "roll tanks across the ocean." But this is ultimately a political and not a logistical question, and it should be addressed in Washington before we are overtaken by events. □

Stephen Miller

WALTER WHITMAN, ENTREPRENEUR

I am Whitman and I sing the song of myself.

When we think of great American success stories, of men who rose from obscure origins to successes that matched —or came close to matching—their ambitions, we tend to think of such political figures as Hamilton, Lincoln, and Truman, or such entrepreneurs as Edison, Carnegie, and Ford. But perhaps the most extraordinary American success story is that of a printer, schoolteacher, housebuilder, and journalist—one of eight children of a ne'er-do-well family—who in the early 1850s transformed himself from a hack writer (stories, poems, one potboiler novel) into a writer considered by many to be America's greatest poet. I am referring, of course, to Walt Whitman.

The story of how Walter Whitman, a relatively obscure journalist, became Walt Whitman, a major American poet, continues to exert its fascination because the transformation seems well-nigh miraculous. Walt Whitman came out of nowhere; the odds and ends of Walter do not prepare us for the glitter of Walt. As Justin Kaplan makes clear in his generally well-written and informative biography,* nothing Whitman wrote before he published *Leaves of Grass* in 1855 bears the slightest resemblance to the poems we find in that volume.

Where, we want to know, did Walt come from? Or as one critic recently put it, how did the author of *Franklin Evans: or the Inebriate,* the third-rate novel Whitman wrote in the 1840s, "levitate" into the author of "Song of Myself"? Like other biographers, Kaplan duly notes influences: the sermons of Elias Hicks, the prose of Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* (one of Whitman's favorite books), the poems of Tennyson, especially "Ulysses," and the operas of Donizetti and Rossini. "But for the opera," Whitman said, "I could never have written *Leaves of Grass.*" And Kaplan is especially good on the quackeries of animal magnetism and phrenology, current at the time, and their part in shaping Whitman's sense of himself as an American bard who was less a poet than a prophet with an important message for his readers. But ultimately the biographer is at a loss for words when confronted with what we embarrassingly call the mystery of creation.

If Kaplan can do little but wonder about the genesis of *Leaves of Grass,* he can describe Whitman's efforts to ensure that *Leaves of Grass* would be a success. Like many other successful Americans, Whitman was a brilliant entrepreneur in behalf of his "product," someone who did not mind bending the truth to make sure that his book got noticed. As Kaplan says, "the lessons of P.T. Barnum's American Museum, General Tom Thumb and the Swedish Nightingale had not been wasted on him." In art as well as in popular entertainment, the name of the game was always promotion.

And Whitman promoted his product shamelessly. In response to Emerson, who had written him a letter in praise of *Leaves of Grass,* Whitman said that the first edition had "readily sold" a thousand copies when in fact it had virtually gone unsold. Worse, Whitman repeated this lie in a letter to Emerson which he placed at the end of the second edition of *Leaves,* published in 1856. Whitman even took a sentence from Emerson's original letter—which was meant to be private, not a blurb—and had it stamped in gold on the spine of the second edition. (The sentence is: "I greet you at the beginning of a great career.") Moreover, throughout his life Whitman wrote and published anonymous reviews in praise of his own work. He sedulously cultivated his image as a common American—"one of the roughs," as he puts it in "Song of Myself"—when, in reality, he had always shunned physical labor. And, like Mark Twain, Whitman made sure that he was photographed, painted, and sculpted innumerable times.

Walt Whitman: A Life, Simon and Schuster, $15.00.

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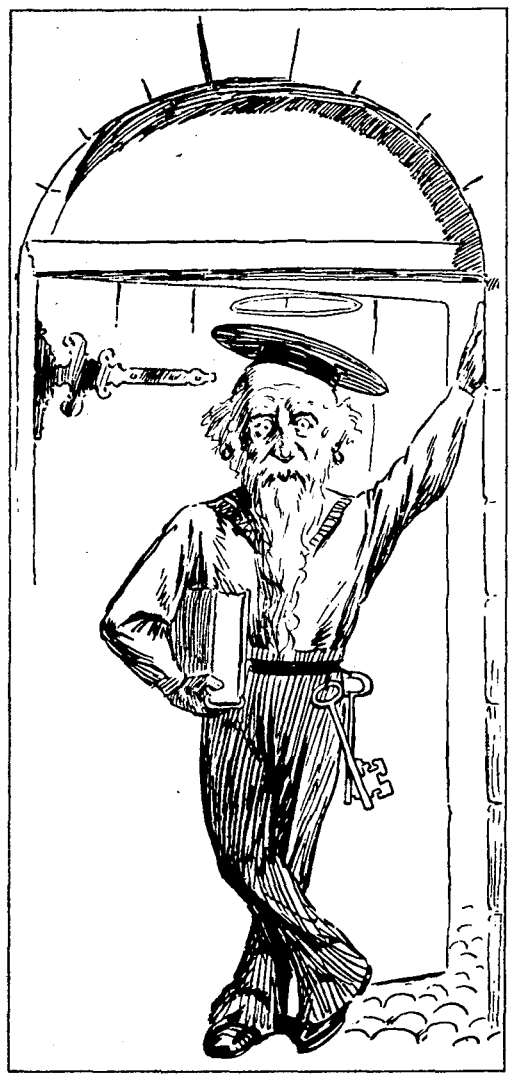
Perhaps Whitman's most audacious effort at self-promotion was an unsigned article he wrote for a Camden newspaper in 1876, lamenting that "Whitman's poems . . . have been met, and are met today, with the determined denial, disgust and scorn of orthodox American authors, publishers and editors, and, in a pecuniary and worldly sense, have certainly wrecked the life of their author" (a half-truth at best). Whitman immediately sent clippings of the article to a band of English admirers, including Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and they in turn circulated the story that a philistine America had scandalously neglected a great American poet's work. The effect of this ploy was to boost the sales of the 1876 edition of *Leaves of Grass*. Whitman, Kaplan says, was "renowned for the obscurity in which he supposedly languished."

Before rushing to pass judgment on Whitman-the-entrepreneur, we should consider another facet of Whitman's character—his self-effacing efforts as a medical aide during the Civil War. The work was not for the squeamish: He saw young men die from battlefield wounds and from operations performed under appalling conditions. "It is awful," Whitman said, "to see so much, & not be able to relieve it." But relieve it in some manner he did, for Whitman made recuperation more pleasant—and dying easier—for many soldiers. Instead of burdening them with pious tracts, Whitman, Kaplan tells us, played games such as Twenty Questions with them, wrote letters for them, and declaimed passages from his favorite writers—Shakespeare and Scott. When not selling his product, he seems to have been a decent and considerate man.

Whatever we may think of Whitman's character, it surely has little bearing upon the question of his poetic achievement. Unfortunately, those who delve into Whitman's life often cannot properly appreciate his poetry. For the more we know about the man, the more we become tantalized by the peculiarities of his personality, and so tend to read the poems as glosses on his psyche. Wanting to find out what manner of man Whitman was, we look through the poems rather than at them.

Aside from deflecting our attention from the poetry, the quest for the "real" Whitman is likely to get us nowhere. Strangely enough, the author of "Song of Myself" is a most elusive individual. As Whitman himself admitted: "There is something in my nature *furtive* like an old hen! You see a hen wandering up and down a hedgerow, looking apparently quite unconcerned, but presently she finds a concealed spot, and furtively lays an egg, and comes away as though nothing had happened. That is how I felt in writing *Leaves of Grass*."

Whitman's admirers were forever trying to pin Whitman down—to have him declare once and for all where he stood on certain matters. These efforts were often pathetic and comical. One such admirer was John Addington Symonds, the English historian and essayist, whom Whitman dubbed "a great fellow for delving into persons." In 1872 Symonds wrote Whitman—calling him "My Master"—and asked him to "tell me more about the Love of Friends!" Twenty years later, having pestered Whitman continually to explain the meaning of certain poems that seemed to be homoerotic confessions, Symonds asked point blank: "In your conception of Comradeship, do you contemplate the possible intrusion of those semi-sexual emotions and actions which no doubt do occur between men?" According to Kaplan, Whitman at first had no intention of answering this "singular letter," but eventually he did, replying vaguely that *Leaves of Grass* "is only rightly construed by and within its own atmosphere and essential character," by which he meant presumably that the work should not be read as autobiography. It was a point he made over and over again. To Anne Gilchrist, intent upon marriage to the Walt of *Leaves of Grass,* he wrote: "You must not construct such an unauthorized and imaginary ideal Figure and call it W.W. and so devotedly invest your loving nature in it. The actual W.W. is a very plain personage, and entirely unworthy of such devotion." Whitman fervently desired admirers for his poems, but he did not want these admirers to go rummaging in the closets of his life. Moreover, to ward off those who read homosexual avowals into his poems, he often suggested that his sexual bent was heterosexual. In the letter to Symonds, he wrote: "Tho' always unmarried I have had six children. . . ." He spoke about his "children" to others as well, yet biographers have found no concrete evidence that Whitman had any children.



A shrewd and cautious biographer, Kaplan realizes that Whitman is unfathomable. "Something," Kaplan says, "compelled the poet . . . to create myths, suppress history, and reveal himself only in riddles and obliquities. . . . Some manuscripts he carefully altered, transposing genders, changing 'him' to 'her' or a man's initials to a number code. By the time he died scarcely a period in his life had not been 'revised' in one way or another." And yet one can hardly blame Whitman's admirers for expecting the poet to be more forthcoming, for Whitman preaches continually of nakedness and openness. In "Song of Myself" he says: "It is time to explain myself—let us stand up." But the "actual W.W." never did stand up.

A remark by Henry James may help to clarify the relation between Whitman and the Walt of *Leaves of Grass*. "The artist," James said, "is present in every page of every book from which he sought so assiduously to eliminate himself." And so it was with Whitman. Although he gave the appearance of writing a confession, he sought to eliminate himself from *Leaves of Grass* and to create an archtypal American figure—part common laborer, part visionary bard. But Whitman was not completely successful: His own experiences and preoccupations obviously shaped the work. The "actual W.W." is present especially in those poems that dwell on the suffering of soldiers and the crowds of people in New York City; and the man is also present, one feels, in those poems that are strongly homoerotic. But the relation of the real Whitman to the all-seeing "I" of the poems will always remain, I suspect, a puzzle.

And since we cannot solve the puzzle, we must simply acknowledge it and try to evaluate the poetry without having it obscured by the gloss of Whitman's personality. Whitman provided a clue as to how we should read *Leaves of Grass:* "I sometimes think the *Leaves* is only a language experiment . . . an attempt to give the spirit, the body, the man, new words, new potentialities of speech." Whitman enriched the poetic language of his day with new words, though some of his experiments failed miserably. Perhaps because he was an autodidact, Whitman had a weakness for high-sounding phrases —"Partaker of influx and efflux I," he says in "Song of Myself"—as well as for foreign phrases. He even made up foreign-

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sounding words. "I am a habitan of Vienna," Whitman proclaims, which provoked Randall Jarrell to remark: "One has an immediate vision of him as a sort of French-Canadian half-breed to whom the Viennese are offering, with trepidation, through the bars of a zoological garden, little mounds of whipped cream."

But Jarrell, one of the best critics of Whitman's poetry, also remarked that "baby critics who have barely learned to complain of the lack of ambiguity in *Peter Rabbit* can tell you what is wrong with *Leaves of Grass*." Whitman took risks with language, but his successes are more compelling than his failures. Nevertheless, reading Whitman can be a jarring experience, for the very bad and the very good are often only a few lines apart. Eight lines after "influx and efflux" Whitman offers us the following gem: "I moisten the roots of all that has grown."

Although Whitman's excesses and absurdities cannot be dismissed, they need not detract from the work of a poet who breathed new life into an American poetry mired in stale poetic language. No contemporary of Whitman's was capable of the following line, from "Song of Myself":

> The spotted hawk swoops by and accuses me, he complains / of my gab and my loitering.

Whitman did more than introduce new words—and new subjects—into the house of poetry; he also experimented with new rhythms and new syntactical arrangements. Again, from "Song of Myself":

> The hiss of the surgeon's knife, the gnawing teeth of his / saw, / Wheeze, cluck, swash of falling blood, short wild scream, / and long, dull, tapering groan, / These so, these irretrievable.

Whitman's language, rhythms, and syntax made free verse respectable, and the poetry of the great modernists—particularly T.S. Eliot—possible.

For Eliot, Whitman was a master of technique—not, as Symonds hoped, a master with a message to impart. Eliot, in fact, had nothing but disdain for Whitman's faith in "Nature without check with original energy." The "message" of *Leaves of Grass* is troubling because it is trite. "A morning glory at my window satisfi[illegible] me more than the metaphysics of books," the poet says in "Song of Myself." The urge to sermonize results in some of Whitman's worst lines:

> Divine am I inside and out, and I make holy whatever I / touch or am touch'd from, / The scent of these arm-pits aroma finer than prayer, This head more than churches, bibles, and all the creeds.

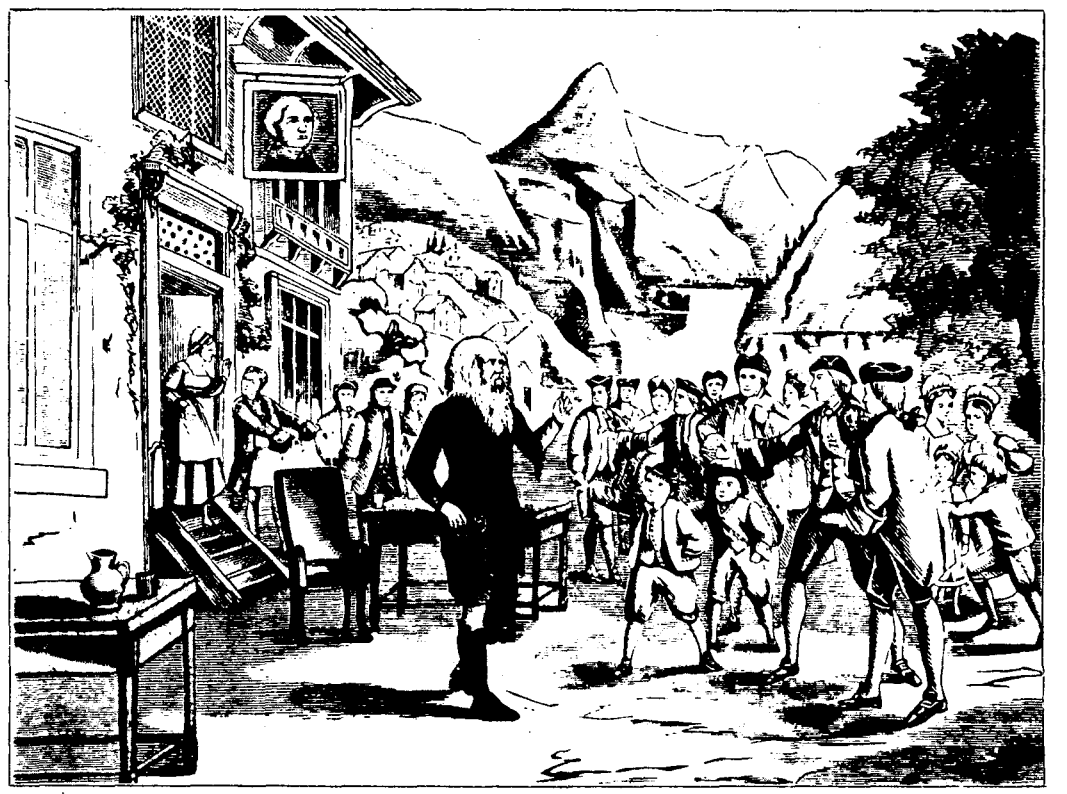
To call attention, then, to Whitman's message is to emphasize the inferior in Whitman's work, yet Kaplan is content to describe *Leaves of Grass* as a "work that celebrates the democratization of the whole person, the liberation of impulse and instinct from involuntary servitude." Not wrong, but a banal half-truth that fails to suggest why we should read Whitman at all, implying rather that Whitman is important only as a forerunner of the therapeutic radicalism of the 1960s. Kaplan, I suspect, knows better, but for some reason prefers not to wrestle with the difficulty of arriving at a fair assessment of Whitman's poetic achievement.

The difficulty is simply this: If Whitman's "message" is trite and if he is guilty of writing an enormous amount of bad poetry, then why read him at all? In "Song of Myself," Whitman himself acknowledges that "logic and sermons never convince," and although he often is a vacuous sermonizer, one does not have to search very long to discover occasions on which he takes his own advice seriously. The maddening thing about "Song of Myself" is that we see in it Whitman at both his best and worst. His shorter masterpieces—"Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking" and "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd"—eschew sermonizing altogether; these poems are complex dramatic exercises in which the poet comes to terms with the reality of death—its awfulness and attraction. These poems make it clear that it is wrong to regard Whitman as an enthusiastic celebrant of Nature. As D.H. Lawrence said, Whitman is "the poet of the soul's last shout and shriek, on the confines of death." In "Lilacs" the hermit thrush sings the "song of the bleeding throat."

We should not conclude, however, that Whitman's poetry improves as his vision darkens. In his best poems the minor key of loss and despair usually modulates into the major key of energy and hopefulness. In "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" Whitman speaks of the "dark patches" of life. "I too knitted the old knot of contrariety," he says, "Blabb'd, blush'd, resented, lied, stole, grudg'd. . . ." But the poem ends on a note of optimism about the ceaseless activity of a great port city.

For all the power of Whitman's best poems, most of which were written during the 1850s, critics find it difficult to focus on the poetry. If Kaplan tends to use the poetry to support his speculations about Whitman's psyche, Quentin Anderson wants to make Whitman central to a certain conception of American man. He speaks of "Whitman's representative character," and argues that Whitman "was painfully isolated and yet . . . profoundly in touch with Americans who shared his deep impulse to come out of culture, to get rid of familial and social roles, to envision themselves as natural forces." Anderson's view cannot be easily dismissed, since the mythic Walt of *Leaves of Grass* is a curiously uprooted and disembodied creature. Identifying himself with everyone and everything, he says that he "contains multitudes": "of every hue and caste am I, of every rank and religion. . . ." Such cosmic rapport suggests that he is a figure without a local habitation and a name, a figure floating free of any real ties.

Was Whitman then a representative American? And was he a homosexual? These two questions don't lend themselves readily to answers. Whitman may have had a deep impulse to come out of culture, but the "actual W.W." was attached to his own family and had many close friends. And the "actual W.W." told Symonds that the "one great difference between you and me, temperament & theory, is *restraint*. . . ." Representative or not, homosexual or not—Whitman was a great poet whose best work celebrates what he calls "the procreant urge of the world" while recognizing the destructive element in nature and in the human soul. "The damp of the night drives deeper into my soul."



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And despite Whitman's professions to the contrary, in his lifetime he was considered a great poet by many writers. One such admirer was Henry James, who called him "a great genius; undoubtedly a very great genius." (Early in his career, James had written a review sharply critical of Whitman, but he came to despise it in later life, calling it "a little atrocity.") Edith Wharton recounts an evening when James read to her from "Song of Myself," "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking," and "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," his voice filling the hushed room "like an organ adagio." "We talked long that night of *Leaves of Grass,*" Wharton says, "tossing back and forth to each other treasure after treasure." Whitman would have appreciated this use of the active present participle—their *tossing* his poetry, declaiming it. And, for all his supposedly confessional bent, Whitman would have been pleased that his two admirers were interested in what he had written, not in who he was. They bought the product the poet-entrepreneur had spent half a lifetime selling. □

Ralph McInerny

THE WEARING O' THE GREENE

Graham Greene was once a Catholic writer.

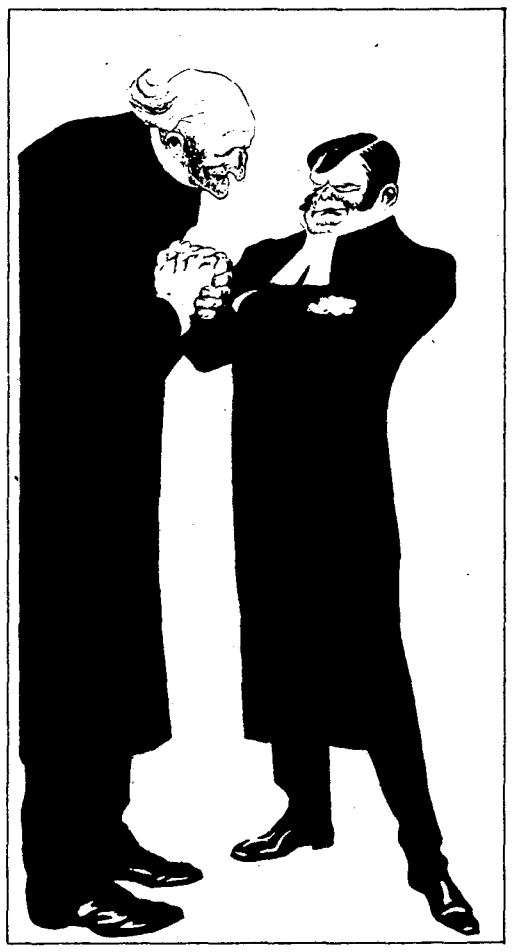
Graham Greene, a novelist enamored of failure, has achieved global success. His exquisitely uninformative autobiography, *A Sort of Life*, concludes with a scene in which Greene is smoking opium in Siam with an old Oxford friend. The meeting seems to have taken place around 1950—dates like names are rare in the book—when Greene was already well-established.

> At Oxford he had written poetry of great promise, but for long now he had given up any attempt to write. Unlike myself he had accepted the idea of failure and he had discovered in lack of ambition a kind of bleared happiness and an ironic amusement when he looked at his contemporaries who had found what people call success. For a writer, I argued, success is always temporary, success is only a delayed failure.

There is a romanticizing of the old friend here, there is the familiar concentration on the worm in the Greene apple, but there is more. Graham Greene's enormous success is doubtless due to the fact that he is technically one of the most accomplished novelists of the twentieth century; but his fundamental importance has derived from the fact that what is at stake in his novels is something a good deal more important than "what people call success."

When one looks back over the novels, moreover, from *Doctor Fischer of Geneva or the Bomb Party,* published last year, to *The Man Within,* published in 1929, it is clear that Greene has not retained the same notions of success and failure. He was once spoken of as a Catholic writer and this seemed apt when one thought of *The Power and the Glory, The Heart of the Matter, The End of the Affair,* and *A Burnt-Out Case.* As for the rest, whether or not a novel had a cleric or Catholic in it, one could sense in most of them that the failure Greene dreaded for his characters was not a worldly one. Heaven and hell were the poles; characters were sinners, their actions freighted with eternal significance.

It may be that Greene's Catholicism is a partial explanation of his anti-Americanism. If you take an other-worldly view and find yourself confronted by a bustling colossus, a superpower, a materialistic, moralizing, omnipresent Leviathan, you will be tempted to pass judgment on it. There is a passage in *Another Mexico* in which Greene looks northward to the glitter and wealth of an American border town and sees the enemy. Better the backwardness and ignorance and poverty of Mexico; south of the border there was still the sense of evil and of good. The United States had evolved beyond good and evil; it was the quintessence of worldliness.



Anthony Burgess first made the point that Greene's anti-Americanism is essentially theological. It is of course contestable that a Catholic must take a negative view of the United States of America. But the point of interest, it seems to me, is whether Greene's theological perspective has remained the same over the years.

Religion in Greene's view is scarcely the opium of the people. His account of his conversion to Catholicism in *A Sort of Life* is startling. Father Trollope, the priest from whom he took instructions, was himself a convert who discovered in himself a vocation to the priesthood. Subsequently Father Trollope joined the Redemptorists. "What had these monks, with an obligation to dwell in all their sermons and retreats on the reality of hell, in common with this stout and cheerful man?" Greene's fundamental difficulty was to believe in God; he felt that if he could accept that he could accept all the rest. It was not argument that persuaded him. "I can only remember that in January 1926 I became convinced of the probable existence of something we call God, though now I dislike the word with all its anthropomorphic associations and prefer Char-

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din's 'Noosphere', and my belief never came by way of those unconvincing philosophical arguments which I derided in a short story called 'A Visit to Morin.'"

Not exactly a road to Damascus event. The autobiography was published in 1971. It is easy to imagine an earlier Greene mocking a character who preferred 'Noosphere' to 'God'. In the early novels it is that sort of nonsense that is derided. But then, in *A Sort of Life,* Greene's description of his baptism is curious.

> The first General Confession, which precedes conditional Baptism and which covers the whole of a man's previous life is a humiliating ordeal. Later we may become hardened to the formulas of Confession and skeptical about ourselves: we may only half intend to keep the promises we make, until continual failure or the circumstances of our private life finally make it impossible to make any promises at all and many of us abandon Confession and Communion to join the Foreign Legion of the Church and fight for a city of which we are no longer full citizens. . . . The only witness of my Baptism was a woman who had been dusting the chairs. I took the name of Thomas—after St. Thomas the doubter and not Thomas Aquinas.

Greene felt no joy in his conversion, only somber apprehension: What if he like Father Trollope were to be attracted to the priesthood? The faith was seen as a vast sea; if one entered it he might soon be swept far out beyond the sight of shore. Scarcely a comforting or consoling vision.

Between *The Man Within* and *Orient Express,* Greene wrote two other novels which he no longer lists in the canon of his works. It was with *Orient Express* that his writing took a turn the full significance of which he seems not at first to have appreciated. For a long time he distinguished between his novels proper and what he called entertainments. In the latter, he freed himself from the baleful effects of Conrad and of Percy Lubbock's *The Craft of Fiction* which elevates into dogma Henry James's theories and practices and encourages an obliquity which makes demands of sometimes dubious value upon the reader. Greene began to write stories full of action—thrillers—and he learned to do so with unsurpassed craftsmanship. But he seems to have done so with misgivings, somewhat sheepishly. The suggestion was that a given book is *only* an entertainment; if you wanted stronger fare you must turn to the novels. When Greene dropped this distinction from the list of his published writings, he seems to have recognized that in all his novels he was employing those elements of the craft which, while closer to the surface in thrillers, must sustain any fiction which hopes to engage and hold a reader.

An apprentice novelist could do far worse than devote himself to a careful analysis of the structure of Greene's novels. On the end pages of my own copies of several Greene novels I have made such analyses; first a quantitative analysis, then the division of the novel into books, parts, chapters, scenes, most of the latter numbered in the text. The architecture of a Greene novel is given to such divisions and subdivisions. With that in hand, one can notice the allotment of points of view, the amount of space devoted to a given stage of the story, the disposition of time. *The Quiet American* is especially adroit in the last, alternating past and present with extraordinary subtelty. Pyle, the quiet American, is dead in the first scene. Such is Greene's artfulness that I doubt that any reader is conscious of this as he goes through the book the first time. Greene tells us that he (like most of the authors who occur in his novels) writes 500 words a day, a modest output; there seems to be a relationship between that meager production and the numerous scenes in the novels.

Greene's craft is superb but craft is relatively impersonal; it is the atmosphere of the novels that is *sui generis.* How to describe it? There is the vivid setting of a scene which is somehow always tawdry: a landscape of failure.

> Hale knew they meant to murder him before he had been in Brighton three hours. With his inky fingers and his bitten nails, his manner cynical and nervous, anybody could tell he didn't belong—belong to the early summer sun, the cool Whitsun wind off the sea, the holiday crowd.

That is the opening of *Brighton Rock* and the way the sentence ends is a sort of signature. Like the rhyming couplet ending a Shakespearean scene, one comes to expect the falling cadence of such triads. Failure and treachery and the danger that innocence represents are other constants. In *The Heart of the Matter,* Scobie is done in by his pity and compassion, victim of seeming virtues. *It's a Battlefield*—that title suggests Greene's view of life, in which the ultimate condition of an immortal soul is the issue.

There is something Manichean in what I have called the Catholic novels, a species of Jansenism that reminds one of Mauriac. But what is surely mainline Christianity is the assumption that men get themselves into difficulties from which they cannot extricate themselves; they stand in need of grace and forgiveness. Not that grace leads to Utopia: This is the Vale of Tears. Anthony Burgess put his finger on the theological source of Greene's anti-Americanism when he suggested that Greene sees the United States as a monument to Pelagianism, a can-do society that transfers its pragmatism onto the moral and religious planes, seeing the world and mankind as malleable, shapeable into the good by merely human efforts. This dictated Greene's view of politics and politicians.

In *The Power and the Glory,* the whiskey priest is contrasted with the *jefe,* the instrument of the new order. Both men are moved by compassion for the poor but while the priest is a personal failure the *jefe* is ascetic, riddled with what one is tempted to call Protestant virtues. The *jefe* envisages a new society, heaven on earth, the rectification of injustice by means of political techniques. Greene clearly has no sympathy with this ideology and his distrust of politicians continues as late as *The Comedians.*

> When I think of all the grey memorials erected

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in London to equestrian generals, the heroes of old colonial wars, and to frock-coated politicians who are even more deeply forgotten, I can find no reason to mock the modest stone that commemorates Jones on the far side of the international road which he failed to cross in a country far from home. . . .

The politician who ran for president on the Vegetarian ticket in 1948 is treated with gentle humor yet as a symbol of ineffective, because political, solutions of man's plight. But there is a disturbing new element in the book. The Marxist Dr. Magiot seems almost exempted from this criticism.

It is with *The Honorary Consul* that the turn in Greene's outlook becomes unmistakably clear. The epigraph of the novel is taken from Thomas Hardy: "All things merge into one another—good into evil, generosity into justice, religion into politics. . . . " Religion into politics! What a shock I felt when I first read that. The story bears out how far Greene has traveled from the contrast of the fugitive priest and the *jefe* in *The Power and the Glory.*

Doctor Edouardo Plarr, half-British, half-Paraguayan, 31, practices medicine in Argentina, just across the river from the country of his birth where his father is a political prisoner. Plarr aids and abets some boyhood friends who come over the border to kidnap the American ambassador and mistakenly kidnap Charley Fortnum, the honorary consul, whose wife is Plarr's mistress. Among the kidnappers is a runaway married priest. Father Léon has lost his faith—in the Church. The kidnappers having also taken Plarr into custody decide they must kill the honorary consul, but in the end it is the terrorists and Plarr who are killed. Fortnum survives to return to his wife who is pregnant by Plarr. The novel was published when Greene was 70 and it is magnificently crafted. But what is one to make of Léon, the priest turned political activist, even terrorist?

Léon's closest friend in the terrorist band, Aquino, is a Marxist, but it is difficult to typify the priest. He says he knows no theology but does not elaborate. He is an overt Manichean, holding that the principles of good and evil coalesce in God. God is the cause of evil, yet it is the Church that has failed. The Gospels, he says, make no sense to the poor—as if their original audience had been Palestinian plutocrats. Here is a typical effusion.

"But I believe in Christ," Father Léon said, "I believe in the Cross and the Redemption. The Redemption of God as well as of Man. I believe that the day side of God, in one moment of happy creation, produced perfect goodness, as a man might paint one perfect picture. God's good intention was for once completely fulfilled so that the night side can never win more than a little victory here and there. With our help, because the evolution of God depends on our evolution. Every evil act of ours strengthens His night side, and every good one helps His day side. . . . It is a terrible process all the same and the God I believe in suffers as we suffer while He struggles against Himself—against His evil side."

Greene treats this heterodox gibberish seriously, though he rewards the priest with a crone for wife (remember Padre José in *The Power and the Glory*?). Father Léon is ready to kill Charley Fortnum for the cause, whatever it is. Since the honorary consul's only fault lies in not being the American ambassador, this presents a moral dilemma. If he *was* the American ambassador there would be no problem, since the latter is a "combatant." The ultimate villain is the U.S.A. and, of course, the ubiquitous CIA. The condemnation is political rather than theological, a theology become politics.

In the end, the priest does not kill but is killed in a quixotic effort to exercise a priestly function in which he seems no longer to believe. One might think this means that Greene is dubious about a priest turned terrorist, but there is no justification for thinking this. A complete reversal has taken place. The political solution takes precedence.

How very sad this is. There is an old joke about the fallen-away Catholic who is asked if he has become a Protestant and replies, "I have lost my faith but not my reason." The same cannot be said of Greene. He seems to have been in the Foreign Legion too long, out on patrol until he has forgotten what the struggle is about. He coddles up to a Panamanian martinet yet wants to condemn a Paraguayan one. On what basis? The basis is no longer theological, or it is a theology which has degenerated into the most predictable kind of anti-American gobbledegook. So one was ready for *The Human Factor,* with its ritual condemnation of South Africa, romanticization of blacks, and wistfully tolerant attitude toward Russia.

Thirteen of Greene's twenty novels are set in foreign lands, appropriately enough for an author who is in the Foreign Legion. The faith he has apparently lost bothers him like an aching tooth. Once he was a Catholic novelist; now he is a political one. Poor Greene. "Poor all of us when you come to think of it."

• • •

But stay. These words were written and indeed already in print when the second volume of Greene's autobiography, *Ways of Escape,** appeared. It is a magnificent book. While it does not prompt me to alter the essential argument of the above, *Ways of Escape* does show a far more even-handed treatment of left and right, even of the United States. The passages on his visits to Poland and Czechoslovakia, his compassionate account of planters in Malaya and farmers in Kenya, and above all, his moving evocation of his friendship with Evelyn Waugh, are a delight to read. Kim Philby is still his friend, they correspond; but Malcolm Muggeridge has said all that need be said about that. Perhaps the greatest value of *Ways of Escape* lies in the accounts and analyses Greene gives of his many and varied writings. His Catholocism? Waugh thought Greene's theology muddled and, above, this almost certainly is true. But he still considers himself, if not a Catholic writer, a writer who happens to be Catholic. The second volume of his autobiography gives us the fullest picture we have ever had of Greene the artist; it tells us about his person only up to a point.

If the Nobel Prize still meant something, I would wish to see it conferred on Graham Greene. Even in its present tarnished state I could wish it for him. Graham Greene, Nobel laureate. This would cap the failure he imagines his career to be. If success is only a delayed failure, this equivocal award is overdue. □

*Simon and Schuster, $12.95.

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John Nollson

AND TOTO TOO?

Election night in Kansas is always a fearsome time for old Democrats. Alerted to the arrival of the customary Republican tornado, whole families take refuge in their cellars until the storm passes and the damage can be assessed. It was no different for Dorothy in November of 1980; her aunt had seen the funnel cloud on the horizon and she shooed the children into the shelter.

This time the wind was far stronger than expected, so great that Dorothy and her dog were lifted out of their cellar and blown hundreds of miles to the East. Fortunately they were gently deposited in a large grassy spot; in fact, they had come to rest not far from the famous Washington Monument in Washington, D.C. The wind had died down, but not before it blew skyward hundreds of white sheets of paper. Dorothy watched them float down to earth, and she picked up one or two of them to see what they said. It was hard to make them out, they were all so different. But every one of them had the same word neatly printed across the top: RÉSUMÉ.

"Toto," said Dorothy to her faithful canine companion, "I don't think we're in Kansas any more."

"I don't know how we're ever going to get home," the little dog replied. "It's getting late, and if we don't get home soon, we will miss our dinner."

"Yes," said Dorothy, "and all our friends in Kansas will be terribly worried. Well, we will just have to find our way back."

They set out in what they thought was a westerly direction. Fairly soon, they reached the highway and they decided to stop for a rest at a roadside picnic place. They noticed a funny-looking man at one of the tables. He was studying a piece of paper that looked a lot like the ones Dorothy had seen floating in the air.

"Excuse me, sir," said Dorothy. "Toto and I are trying to find our way back to Kansas, and I wonder whether you could help us."

"I would like to help you," said the man, "but I'm quite incapable of helping anyone. I'm the Tin Man, you see, and my joints are so stiff from want of oiling that I am barely able to move. My joints have been stiff for many years. I served in the Eisenhower administration, and they haven't been lubricated since. I was hoping that *you* would be able to help me."

"How can I help you?" asked Dorothy.

"Oh," said the Tin Man with great poignancy, "Oh, if only I can get to see the great Oz in Washington, or even his secretary. Oh, if only I can get him to look at my résumé! Why, then I'm sure I'll be able to find all the oil I need so that I can be lithe and limber once again."

Dorothy was touched by the pleading tone in the Tin Man's voice and decided that she could not leave him there by the roadside.

"Don't worry, Tin Man," said Dorothy reassuringly. "Toto and I will help you get to Washington so that you can meet the great Oz."

And with that, she helped the Tin Man to his feet and managed to get him walking again, even though his joints, to tell the truth, creaked quite noticeably.

They had not gone very far when they noticed what appeared to be a man lying by the side of the road. Dorothy rushed to assist him, while the Tin Man creaked behind.

"Dear me," said Dorothy, her voice showing grave concern, "you do seem to be in something of a pickle."

"Yes, I am," answered the prone figure, "my insides have been leaking and I am no longer able to stand erect."

Dorothy noticed that there did indeed seem to be straw poking out through every seam of the man's rather florid clothing.

"Yes, child," the prone man continued, "I'm the Scarecrow, and I'm never going to make it back to Washington to see the great Oz. But you are young and sprightly. Perhaps if I give you my résumé you'll take it to Oz for me, and he will send his retainers out here to rescue me."

"Oh, there's no need for that," said Dorothy, as Toto wagged his tail in agreement. "I shall gather up some of this dried grass and, in a jiffy, you'll be good as new."

And, true to her word, Dorothy stuffed the man with grass and, with a stitch or two, he seemed as good as new.

"Thank you, little girl," said the man, clearly pleased with his new shape. "I am the Scarecrow, and I'll be your friend for ever and ever."

"But why would a scarecrow want to see the great Oz in Washington, D.C.?" Dorothy asked.

"You see," said the Scarecrow, "I used to work at the White House. I was a member of President Nixon's staff. Every so often they would prop me up against the iron fence to frighten all those demonstrators. But then the demonstrators stopped coming and they had no further use for me. One day, they dumped me by the roadside, where I have been until the very moment you found me."

"That wasn't very nice," said Dorothy, disapprovingly.

"It's a rough game," said the Scarecow, knowingly. "But I know that as soon as the great Oz hears that I'm back in town, he'll let me have my old job back."

"But there aren't any demonstrators anymore," said Dorothy.

"Well, not yet," the Scarecrow agreed, "but they'll be back."

So Dorothy, Toto, the Tin Man, and the Scarecrow all set out to find the great Oz.

They had not gone all that very far when they came upon a motley-looking lion. He looked up at the four of them, but he could manage only the faintest roar.

"You're not very frightening for a lion," Dorothy said..

"No," the lion agreed, "I'm not very frightening at all. The only person I scare is me. I'm a quite cowardly lion, you see. In fact, I'm not very brave at all. But I'm sure that if I were able to see the great Oz, he'd give me a very important position in the government, and then everyone would be afraid of me."

"Why would everyone be afraid of you?" asked Dorothy.

"Because I'd be a regulator. No one would be able to do anything unless I permitted it. Why, maybe I wouldn't even let them burn coal in the winter, no matter how cold it got!"

"That wouldn't be very nice," said Dorothy. →

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"Yes, I guess not," answered the Cowardly Lion. "But how else can I get people to be afraid of me?"

"I certainly don't know," said Dorothy, "But from what I've heard, the great Oz is a wise and kindly man, and I'm sure he'll be able to think of lots of other ways for you to get your courage back."

It was getting late now, so the five of them decided to go to sleep and resume their journey in the morning.

They got an early start and reached the capital about lunchtime. They learned from a friendly policeman where the great Oz had his office, but an unfriendly policeman at the main door refused to let them in. Fortunately, Dorothy had a dollar bill which, she thought, could be converted into ten dimes for ten telephone calls. But since the time this story was first written, the cost of a telephone call has risen to fifteen cents.

They gathered around a telephone booth and dialed the great Oz's number.

Unfortunately, Mr. Oz was not in at the moment, but he would be back to them as soon as he could. No, it was not known when the great Oz would return because he was in a meeting. Yes, the great Oz did remember them from the old days. Of course, the great Oz believed they could make a useful contribution to the new America. No, it was quite impossible; the great Oz's secretary was not authorized to give out his home number, nor even his home address. Yes, the great Oz did have a post office box, but it was filled to overflowing. Yes, they should check back with the great Oz in the morning.

"Humpf," said Dorothy, after placing her sixth telephone call, leaving only one useless dime, "I'm beginning to wonder whether there really is any Oz at all."

"No Oz?" said the Tin Man, the Scarecrow, and the Cowardly Lion in unison. "Why, child, of course there's an Oz. There's always been an Oz and there always will be. Why, the next thing you'll be telling us is that there's no yellow brick road either. But everyone knows there is one, and everyone knows where it leads."

"Arf," said Toto in approval. "Arf, arf, Oz *is*!"

"Well, I still don't believe you," said Dorothy, "and I'm going back to Kansas. The rest of you can spend the rest of your lives trying to get through to this Oz of yours. But I don't think you'll ever find him."

"Please don't give up," said the Cowardly Lion. "Just try one more telephone call. Who knows, maybe he'll be back from his meeting."

"But all we have left is one dime, and that's not enough," Dorothy protested.

They fell silent.

"Gee," said the Tin Man after a while, "things sure have changed since I was around here. Why, in the good old days, you could call Oz collect!" □

Aram Bakshian, Jr.

REQUIEM FOR A BEATLE

Shot in the dark.

Mark Twain once remarked that Richard Wagner's music was not as bad as it sounded. For a number of people with a serious interest in music, the same applied to the Beatles; properly arranged and performed, some of their work was artistically as well as commercially successful. John Lennon and Paul McCartney—especially McCartney—understood that only melody can make a song weather changing fads and generations to become a true evergreen.

This simple but often-overlooked musical fact was brought home to me by a lovable and rather unlikely friend in his villa overlooking Vienna seven years ago. My friend was the late Robert Stolz, Austria's last waltz and operetta king. Robert was ninety-two at the time, still actively composing and conducting, and I was twenty-nine. But it was the venerable little maestro who defended the Beatles' music when I made a disparaging remark about it. "My boy, you haven't *really* listened to their music because you don't like *them*," he told me, going on to point out the melodic quality of several popular Beatles tunes. "A good melody—and the Beatles have created more than one—is like a beautiful, strongly woven piece of material. Unless it's slashed to bits it can withstand all manner of mistreatment and still preserve its texture, its tone, and its inherent appeal. And besides," the maestro smiled, blinking his clear blue eyes, "as our great Viennese *philosophe*, Karl Kraus, once asked, what is Beethoven's Ninth compared to a familiar tune played by an organ-grinder when the tune is tied to a memory?"

What indeed? For many members of my generation (though not, I hasten to add, for me) the Beatles were a musical extension of self—sometimes echoing and sometimes foreshadowing the set of virtues, vices, conflicts, ideals, and delusions which they thought of, probably mistakenly, as uniquely theirs.

One hopes that they were wrong because, if they were right, even the best music of the Beatles is doomed to automatic oblivion the moment the last member of the Beatles Generation signs off some time in the middle of the next century. I don't expect this to happen, because what is best in their work is not shackled to the sixties—although much of what was worst is, and many of their more rabid fans (including John Lennon's alleged killer) seem to be.

The latter fact was painfully obvious even before Lennon's blood had congealed on the pavement in front of the Dakota Apartments. His slaying unleashed a '60s style media orgy—swarms of cameramen, photographers, interviewers, and weeping, laughing, swaying, humming, and occasionally zonked Beatles fans, plus a big

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contingent of Manhattan's floating population of all-purpose groupies, grieving for a fallen superstar and hoping for a few seconds on the screen.

Listening to the interviews was instructive. Most of the crowd had little coherent to say about Lennon's music, even less about any of his personal qualities. They seemed more intent on mourning (and celebrating) their own lost adolescence, what they had been in the sixties and early seventies, the slogans, the alienated pose, the infinite self-pity and self-indulgence—in short, the mass-marketed adolescent counterculture some of them have never really outgrown. Again and again they mouthed the same phrase about the fallen forty-year-old from Liverpool: "I grew up (sic) with him and his music; he was part of my life."

But if many of his fans had not outgrown their Beatlemania, John Lennon had outgrown many of his fans. In one of his last public statements, Lennon poked fun at the enthusiasts and rock critics, mostly now in their thirties and forties, ". . . the same age as me, and they're all the ones wishing for the Kennedys to come back, wishing for the '60s. . . . They're already locked into the things that rock and roll was supposed to save us from. They probably even want a war so that we can have an anti-war movement. . . . But we don't need the '60s and we don't need the Beatles and we don't need the Kennedys. . . . Let's leave them where they are in a nice memory. . . . The youngsters will be screaming the same stuff they always scream, the same stuff we screamed, and it's irrelevant . . . just let it lie."

Perhaps, on the threshold of middle age, all Lennon was saying—but with a new conservative twist—was give peace a chance.

It is sad when anyone is cut down prematurely; it is a pity that John Lennon and his uneven but real talent should die a comparatively early death. But I couldn't help wondering whether some of his more extravagant on-camera mourners had ever privately shed as many tears at the death of a personal loved one as they lavished on this rather ambivalent relic of their lost youth. Wasn't it, after all, the same kind of overblown mass emotionalism, impacting on a warped mind (reportedly further damaged by several bad acid trips) that had led to Lennon's murder by a Beatlemaniac stalking second hand karma?

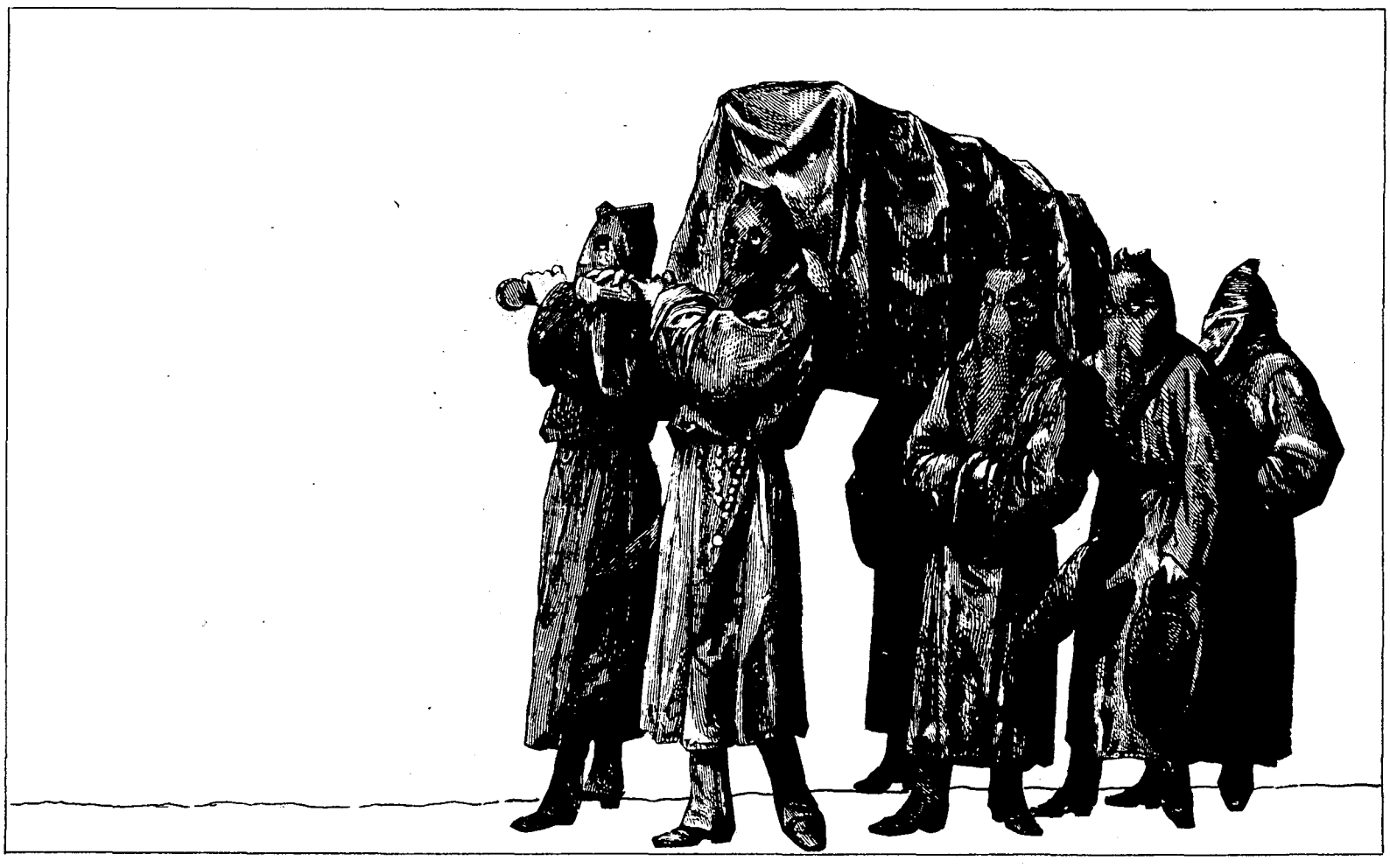
Each generation has its heroes, some admirable, some absurd, and some obscene. John Lennon was a bit of all three by turns—apparently sincere in his vague, muddled pacifism; the dupe of quack Gurus and other exotic con artists promising better living through vegetarianism, hemp-headedness, or transcendental meditation; the occasional victim of his fame-induced megalomania as when, in 1966, he claimed that the Beatles were "more popular than Jesus now."

While I suspect Jesus would have won by a nose, Lennon did unconsciously suggest a more valid comparison between some of the cruder early Christians and his own musical apostles when he graciously added that, "Jesus was all right, but his disciples were thick and ordinary. It's them twisting it that ruins it for me." Hear, hear.

What then, to the extent that it can be pinned down this early, is the Lennon legacy—beyond an estate estimated at from $30 million to $235 million? His ineffectual advocacy of various fads and crank political causes will soon be forgiven and forgotten by most. A number of pleasant melodies and lyrics (often derivative rather than purely original) will survive the forgettable bulk of his musical output. And he will occupy a sombre footnote in the social history of his era as one of the first pop heroes to use his position to glamorize the drug culture to a susceptible audience which still suffers the consequences, even as it laments his death at the hands of one of the all-too-many moral and mental burnouts of the Beatles Generation.

Because I was only four years younger than John Lennon, and because I always considered the Beatles more of a social phenomenon than a source of listening pleasure, I tried to enjoy their antics while taking their serious posing and propagandizing with a grain of salt. I hope that most of their surviving fans will apply the same standard to the flood of crocodile tears being publicly shed on Lennon's behalf, often using his death as a pretext for everything from gun law lobbying to the mass indictment of America as a "sick" society.

May John Lennon rest in Strawberry Fields, and may what was worthwhile in his art outlive that which was dross. □



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BOYCOTT THE *TIMES*

by Michael Ledeen

It is time to organize the great 1981 national boycott of the *New York Times*. Now that Richard Burt has left, one can expect to find an uninterrupted flow of the sort of ideological frenzy that we read on Christmas Eve. Signed by Jo Thomas, the story described a meeting in Havana involving Guatemalan guerrillas:

> They had come to Havana to represent a coalition of four armed Guatemalan guerrilla groups at the second Cuban Communist Party congress, an event that drew hundreds of foreign delegates and turned into a sort of Woodstock for revolutionaries, a festival of affection that revolved not around music but around the person of Fidel Castro, who, revolution well in hand, dominated the meeting. . . .
>
> If Cuba is now having to tax its peasants because they are threatening to become rich, if Cuba is now having to worry about producing more color televisions and fretting over how to get lazy employees to work, it is still a nation where the portraits of José Marti and Ché Guevara hang on every wall and the memory of its aging revolution generates respect.
>
> The 1,700 Cuban delegates to the congress looked well fed, sometimes overfed. The foreign delegates, especially those from Western countries, were far better dressed, but they were often thin, sometimes frail, and they had about them the passionate fervor that in Cuba, 21 years after the revolution, sometimes seems a bit mechanical.

Quite a performance, even from the newspaper that gave us Herbert Matthews and lionized Fidel in the first place. One understands that the *New York Times* likes correspondents who hail the revolution, and even show enough independence to criticize the Cuban revolutionaries for overeating. But that bit about the Cuban peasants becoming rich is too much for me. Is that what drove the tens of thousands of refugees out earlier last year? And has Jo Thomas never heard of the rationing in Cuba? And if Jo Thomas hasn't, where are the editors?

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Lest you think that this sort of rhetoric is limited to such "progressive" publications as the *Times,* I was surprised to see Karen Elliott House, one of our best correspondents, spreading high-level disinformation in the *Wall Street Journal.* On December 11, House wrote: "Already, Italy's Communist Party has voted unanimously to break relations with the Soviet Union's Communist Party if Russian troops invade Poland. This move would make it easier for the Italian government to support military buildups in Europe in response to any Soviet invasion of Poland."

To begin with, the notion of the Italian Communist Party "voting" does some violence to the English language, but to imagine that over a million people would vote "unanimously" is absurd. Surely there is some lonely Stalinist in the mountains of northern Italy who is in favor of the invasion of Poland; after all, more than 60 percent of Italian Communists still approve the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia. But Karen House is a good reporter, so I called several leading Italian Communists to find out what had happened. So far as they know, there has been no such "vote"; the closest thing to it is a letter from Secretary-General Berlinguer to the heads of other Communist parties, warning that a Russian invasion of Poland might have dire consequences. But there has been no vote, and certainly no unanimous vote (aside from the usual, empty sense of the verb in its Communist context: The leader spoke, and the comrades saluted).

One additional point: This story—that the Italian Communists would break with Moscow if there were an invasion of Poland—was circulating around Washington for about ten days before it was picked up. Stories like this seem to have an independent life, floating around the media universe until someone finally gives them precise form. But why, of all things, the *Wall Street Journal?* By such actions the Italian Communists acquire a certain legitimacy without actually doing anything at all.

Oh, yes: Did you know that the *Wall Street Journal* will soon offer space to Mr. Alexander Cockburn (pronounced Co-burn) and Mr. Hodding Carter III? The former once a month, the latter twice a month. Perhaps the remaining weekly slot will be given to Andrew Young. Why is the *Journal* doing this? Presumably to show how broad-minded they are, and to give their editorial pages some "balance." It's one of the curiosities of American journalism that as daily journalism becomes more politicized, the op-ed pages strain for "balance." This, of course, is back-asswards. We want balanced, accurate reportage, and strong, politicized editorial comment. That the reverse occurs is one further sign of the confusion characteristic of our political culture.

The Caribbean: With all the attention directed at the Caribbean revolutionaries, you'd have thought there would have been more interest in the drubbing delivered by the Jamaican people to their own revolutionary regime under the leadership of Michael Manley. But whereas lots of outspoken congresspersons and editorialists have implored the administration to send money to the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, not much thought has been given to support for the new government in Jamaica, even though the new prime minister, Edward Seaga, has called for a new "Marshall Plan" in the Caribbean in support of pro-Western governments. Apparently it's easier to generate passion for aid to one's enemies. I saw one quiet AP story on December 4 in the *Washington Star,* reporting Seaga's speech to a distinguished American audience. And the last paragraph is one of the most important to appear in the American press in a long time: "The Marshall Plan was an American financed project that led to the recovery of shattered Western European economies after World War II." You know what that means? It means that the Associated Press editors—who know their business—realize that the American public no longer knows what the Marshall Plan was. And they failed to add that the Marshall Plan was offered in response to mounting Russian pressure on American friends. That clause should be there, because even those few citizens who know what the Marshall Plan was, forget that the Russian campaign against Western Europe, Greece, and Iran was the catalyst for the program.

Technology Transfer Department: There are few problems more complicated than that of selling—or giving—high technology to the Russians. Kissinger believed that this should be part of an overall policy of "linkage," by which he meant that we should be willing to sell certain items to the Kremlin if, and only if, the Russians' international behavior is tolerable. Carter had a different concept: We should trade unless there is a clear reason not to. As a result, the Russians were able to continue to trade with us even though their imperialistic actions became steadily more menacing. Reagan says he wants to go back to linkage, but whereas six or seven years ago there was a predominant strategic advantage in our favor, today the balance has shifted in favor of the Russians. How realistic is it to believe linkage can be achieved?

There are other problems as well: Should the American government attempt to constrain the development of Russian energy programs, or should we encourage them? The *Boston Globe* editorialists think we should help: If we interfere with Soviet energy development, the *Globe* said on December 10, it "can only . . . help drive up the world price of oil, which neither Europe nor the U.S. needs to have happen now." Moreover, according to the *Globe* strategists, "there is little point in trying to penalize the Soviet Union in ways that penalize ourselves even more heavily in the long run."

On the other hand, if we help the Soviets achieve a higher degree of

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energy independence, might that not encourage them to meddle in the Persian Gulf, which can only cause us potentially fatal problems? The point of all this, is that we need a presidential decision about the basic question, rather than a patchwork of ad hoc decisions, case by case.

Now let's go back to the *Globe*. What is the overall context of the editorial? Is it the strategic balance? The question of Russian energy policies? Not at all; it's the NSC-State conflict. For the *Globe* editorialists, a recent decision to withhold some high-technology items from the Russians testifies to the nincompoopery of Mr. Brzezinski. This sort of personalization of serious problems ill serves us. And I like to think that the demon in charge of typos punished the *Globe* with this memorable last line: "And that is something Roland Reagan might want to keep in mind. . . ."

New York Times *Department:* The *Times,* in its endless campaign to persuade its readers of benign Russian intentions, dropped a little box onto page 27 on the 7th of December. It's a peculiar "news story": "Does the Soviet Union's doctrine contemplate fighting, and winning, a limited nuclear war, as some Western specialists contend?" A Soviet military expert who consented to be interviewed on the subject said Moscow's doctrine did not. The Russian expert is a retired general named Milshtein, and in a long interview published in September he said that the latest Soviet doctrine, as reflected in the thoughts of a certain Ogarkov, was not in keeping with the earlier statements of General Sokolov, who had called for a war-winning nuclear strategy. What the *Times* did not say was that Professor Richard Pipes of Harvard University had written in to advise the *Times* editorial board that Ogarkov himself, in the latest edition of the Russian Military Encyclopedia, had advocated a war-winning nuclear doctrine. All the news that's fit to print, or all the news we want to print? Boycott the *Times*. □

THE TALKIES

ROBERT REDFORD'S FEELINGS

by John Podhoretz

Lake Forest, Illinois: front lawns, stately manses, red leaves blowing prettily across beautifully paved driveways, dark Mercedes-Benzes in those driveways. The sound of Pachelbel's Canon in D, first on a piano, then sung by a chorus in fine voice. Close-up on a nervous boy's face in the chorus, singing: Hallelujah. With this, dear readers, we enter into the country of *Ordinary People,* a country of WASPs and their $500,000 houses, their very attractive wives and very tall husbands. But there is hidden tragedy here, tragedy we can see clearly on that nervous boy's face. Conrad Jarrett (for such is the boy's name) can do little but sing; he has no appetite, is consumed with some mysterious guilt, has recently returned from an extended stay at some "hospital," and has odd scars on his wrists, which he covers all the time with heavy sweaters. Conrad is not a well fellow.

There is another problem in the Jarrett household: Conrad's mother, Beth, who is unable to talk to her son, and who seems to harbor some sort of hatred for him. She mildly tosses into a noisy garbage disposal a couple of pieces of French toast which Conrad says he does not feel like eating. She does not want him to see Dr. Berger, his kindly Jewish psychiatrist. She is short-tempered and unfriendly with her son. She nearly has a fit when she learns that Conrad has dropped off the high-school swim team.

Her husband, Conrad's father Calvin, is a milquetoast—albeit a highly successful milquetoast. He seems to love his son, but cannot talk to him any more than his wife can, even though *he* tries. He does not know whose side to take in mother-son fights. He knows there is an evil pawing at his family, but cannot say what it is, or will not say. He repeatedly says he loves his wife, loves his son, but cannot satisfy either.

What is the tragedy that has occurred? It turns out that Bucky, Conrad's older brother, died in a boating accident about a year before the movie's action begins. Bucky, we learn, is the child Beth really loved, and she has blamed Conrad ever since for his brother's death (Conrad was with Bucky when the accident took place). Conrad, too, feels guilty—so guilty, in fact, that he attempted to commit suicide a little while after his brother's death, and was then himself committed to a psychiatric hospital. Upon his return home, he is fine on the outside, but on the inside what sinister self-immolating forces are at work we can only guess. Dr. Berger, Conrad's psychiatrist, tells him to feel, feel, feel ("I don't put much stock in dreams," he tells Conrad in the manner of a borscht-belt comic, as if spending precious time on dreams would distract the patient from the true issue, that of feeling), but Conrad is unable to express those feelings, even when his mother tells him she wishes he had died instead of Bucky. Clearly, all's not right with these three ordinary people, and anxiously we await the murder of Beth, or the suicide of Conrad, or both.

Ordinary People is the first film to be directed by Robert Redford, America's reigning movie star and the WASP golden boy of every teenage girl's dreams. What Redford and his scenarist, Alvin Sargent (author of two of the most abhorrent films of the 1970s, *Bobby Deerfield,* and *Julia,* for which he won an Oscar) have fashioned out of Judith Guest's best-selling novel is as blatant a story of good (Conrad and, to a lesser extent, Calvin) and evil (Beth) as that silent film classic, *The Perils of Pauline,* in which the villain tied beautiful Pauline to the railroad tracks. They have Freuded it up (in a flashback, Beth touches Bucky in an odd, suggestive way), they have made it elegant by setting it in the homes of the wealthy, and have made it more "sophisticated" by adding pointed touches of social commentary (a cocktail party sequence, in which the talk is all of stock-market figures and portfolios, presents us with many, many Beths, all of them most assuredly doing to their children what Beth is doing to hers, and not a one of them is interested in a single vital issue such as Redford's favorite, solar energy). But still the movie comes out melodrama.

And a particularly virulent piece of melodrama it is. For the issue here is not love scorned, as it was in its predecessor, *The Perils of Pauline,* but is a mother's hatred of her child—an ugly and almost unbelievable subject at best. Beth never went to see Conrad all those months when he was in the hospital, Beth wishes Conrad dead, Beth cannot even bear to pose for a family photograph with Conrad. She stiffens and gazes straight ahead in astonishment when, under Dr. Berger's guidance, Conrad hugs his mother, trying to love her for what she is. Beth is pure evil, but Conrad is a saint, in no way at all to blame for his brother's death, holding his difficulties in so as not to trouble anyone, even giving his mother all the benefit of the doubt that the monster does not deserve. What will save Conrad? Simple: Beth's death, or better yet, her spiritual death, her banishment from the house she loves and from the secure life she has so long struggled for. And this is precisely what happens: Calvin, after 21 years of marriage, finally discovers that his wife is "not a feeling person," tells her this, and so away she goes in a taxi while Calvin and Conrad hug each other on the back patio, saying "I love you."

The praise the movie has received (four stars from those critics who award stars, raves from everyone else with the honorable exception of Pauline Kael, in the *New Yorker*) is the easily anticipated praise that any actor receives if he makes a suitably artsy, and politically correct, debut as a director. Redford has done both. There is no music in the film, a sure

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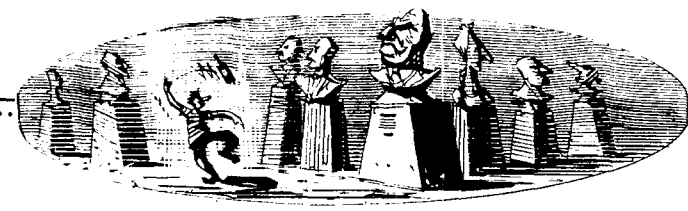
sign of serious intent, except for that brief moment at the beginning. The film is slow-paced, so that we can savor every golden word about "feeling" and the lack thereof. And, most important of all, it portrays the rich as characterless, heartless, empty, awful people, concerned only with interior decoration and cleanliness. Mr. Redford, WASP of Sun Valley, Idaho, and the Upper East Side of Manhattan, of course has nothing in common with these WASPs, since he cares about social issues (as the star of such films as *All the President's Men* and *Brubaker* and narrator of TV documentaries on the environment) and feeling and *still* pulls down $3 million per picture.

What is it that the movie critics want? Is it the kind of "important study of the family today" that they say *Ordinary People* is or is it the black-and-white morality play, with suitable socialist commentary, that it really is? For these critics, Mary Tyler Moore's superb performance as Beth (which is, if you care to look closely, and I do not blame you if you don't want to, an unerringly exact depiction of a certain kind of efficient, cold woman) is nothing next to Timothy Hutton's hysterical portrayal of Conrad as the son not of Calvin Jarrett, but of Anthony Perkins.

Conrad is slightly deranged, and why? Because of his mother. The pre-adolescent fantasy of every child, that he is adopted and that his mother has tied up his real parents in the front closet, comes blissfully true. She will not feel, she cannot feel. The dispassionate viewer of *Ordinary People* understands why this is: Her husband (played in the dullest possible way by Donald Sutherland) is a weakling whom she controls with the slightest twist of her finger, and her son is a martyred loon. She is, perversely, more likable than Conrad or Calvin, and one hopes that now, rid of these two feeling types, she will be able to get in a peaceful round of her favorite game, golf.

Fitzgerald said: *The rich are different from you and me.* Redford and Sargent modify Hemingway's celebrated answer, and reply: *Yes, they are more evil.* □



EMINENTOES

ABBIE'S ROAD TO STARDUST

by Tod Lindberg

Abbie Hoffman, the famous yippie, was arrested (not for the first time) in 1973 for allegedly attempting to sell some three pounds of cocaine to undercover policemen in New York. Governor Rockefeller's stiff drug laws had just gone into effect, and the penalty for such a crime was a prison sentence of fifteen years to life. In early 1974, Hoffman jumped bail—he became a fugitive, he went "underground." This was not the underground of David Janssen in "The Fugitive"; on the contrary, Hoffman travelled to Mexico and Europe, published a book (and threw a party for it in New York), wrote a couple dozen articles which appeared in various semi-reputable magazines, granted interviews in print and even on television, and wrote his newly published autobiography, *Soon to be a Major Motion Picture.** In spite of all of the fun he was having, he was mindful to keep an eye out for the authorities, though as it turned out the authorities were not really there.

In September of last year word that Hoffman was going to come up from the underground (such as it was) appeared in the newspapers with quite a splash. The actual surrender made an even bigger splash. On the day he gave himself up, ABC's newsmagazine program "20/20" ran an interview Barbara Walters had done with Hoffman earlier that week. The network news programs featured Hoffman prominently that evening. He held a press conference at the office of the publisher of his autobiography—the date he turned himself in and the publication date of the book having coincided. Abbie Hoffman's surrender, then, was a media event, and everyone, including the media, recognized it as such.

The press turned most of its attention to the last few years of Hoffman's life "underground." During that time, Hoffman had lived under the alias of Barry Freed on an island in the Saint Lawrence River. When a proposal came up to dredge the river and remove some of the smallest islands to allow for wintertime navigation, Freed/Hoffman became an activist again. He joined and became the public relations director of a "Save the River Committee" because, as he explained to the press, the provisions necessary for wintertime navigation would irreparably damage the ecology of the river. He gave interviews to local papers and television stations, he spoke to Rotary Clubs, and he was instrumental to the success of the Save the River Committee. For all his efforts, Freed/Hoffman was appointed to the Great Lakes Basin Commission, a government organization. He received a letter from Governor Hugh Carey of New York, praising him for his "keen public spirit." He testified before a Senate subcommittee chaired by New York's Daniel Patrick Moynihan, and, sporting his late 1970s disguise of short hair, full beard, and nose job, he even posed for a picture with the smiling senator. Immediately after the news of his surrender broke, a man named Tom Englehart, head of the river committee, was quoted in the *Christian Science Monitor:* "I never met Abbie Hoffman. I met a very aggressive Barry Freed" who was "very friendly and had lots of energy."

Hoffman, of course, was not the first counterculture figure of the 1960s to find a new home in the various environmental and anti-nuclear causes of the 1970s. Banding together probably saved those of his ilk from having to answer for their earlier politics. None has had to make apologies along the lines of Jerry Rubin's *Growing (Up) at 37.* In fact, Abbie Hoffman has had the easiest time of it—his "Barry Freed" had a clean slate. And he found in the river committee a friendly and unquestioning circle, one in which the issue was the cause of the moment, not the actions of the past.

There is no need to recall the futility and stupidity of those actions; this for all its importance somehow misses the point when the subject is Abbie Hoffman. Unlike Tom Hayden and his earnest followers in the SDS, for example, Hoffman always seemed more a jokester. This was certainly evident in the Hoffman of the 1960s, and the emphasis then, and especially now, has been on the character and his style.

This emphasis is by no means unique to descriptions of Abbie Hoffman; it is rather a growing trend in the depiction of all hippies, yippies, and zippies. An excellent representation of the hippie as folk character is found in Miloš Forman's version of *Hair* (1979). Look at these wonderful free spirits, singing and dancing and frolicking in Central Park. Look how they take a backward farm boy and initiate him into the wonders of drugs and love. They're not revolutionaries, just people having a good time. When the hippie tribe crashes and breaks up a suburban upper class "deb" party, it is not the poor communards rising up against the capitalist oppressors; rather, it is a fun-loving crew breathing a little life into some hopelessly stuffed shirts. (To his credit, Forman's movie is not wholly unambiguous; he has given us enough subtext to suggest that the hippies are not such great guys after all. One of them, for example, has abandoned his fiancée and son.) The characters are easygoing and, one gets the impression, fun to be around. Almost all of the unpleasantness which might arise from a consideration of the motives of the characters is played down or ignored. No action really means anything; people simply *are.*

Hoffman's account of the 1960s in *Soon to be a Major Motion Picture* conforms to this mold. He writes as though he had been and even still is merely a fun-loving kid on a romp. The first truly noteworthy event of his hippie life was the ruckus he and

*Putnam, $13.95.

Tod Lindberg is a student at the University of Chicago and editor of Counterpoint.

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some friends created from the gallery of the New York Stock Exchange. Hoffman writes:

> We started clowning, kissing and hugging, and eating money. . . . I passed out money to freaks and tourists alike, then all at once we ran to the rail and began tossing out the bills. Pandemonium. The sacred electronic ticker tape, the heartbeat of the Western world, stopped cold. Stock brokers scrambled over the floor like worried mice, scurrying after the money. Greed had burst through the business-as-usual facade.

Hoffman clearly had a great time, and from his account it seems like something anyone would have a great time doing. Only later do we get an inkling of the meaning of this event, as reflected in Hoffman's gleeful recollection of its consequences:

> Was it a real threat to the Empire? Two months after our band of mind-terrorists raided the stock exchange, twenty thousand dollars was spent to enclose the gallery with bulletproof glass. Someone out there had read the ticker.

Hoffman is telling us that he and his friends had clowned, kissed, and hugged their way to the creation of pandemonium, and also that the stock exchange people were made so nervous that they took expensive steps to insure their unimpeded function. One would expect that the supposed effectiveness of the demonstration would receive more emphasis from a radical cultural revolutionary. Instead, Hoffman stresses the good time.

When Hoffman first met Jerry Rubin, he thought him too stiff and serious. Hoffman devised an antidote: "As soon as he and his friends hit shore, I took them down to Wall Street to burn up some money. . . . Rubin got the message." Hoffman tells us that at the time he only wanted to be a free spirit, taking nothing—especially revolutionary tactics—too seriously. In fact, he now views these tactics as so unserious as to be barely revolutionary. Hoffman's account of the march on the Pentagon is written with much the same carefree abandon. Upon Jerry Rubin's invitation ("Abbie, why don't you get all those freaks off their asses and join us in Washington?"), the New York hippies would march and then perform a rite of exorcism on the evil Pentagon, a rite inspired by an earlier "glorious night of religious group-grog. . . . " A good time was had by all.

Oh, there were unpleasant moments. For instance, we read that the police attacked the hippies in Grand Central Station, that the police stormed the hippie barricades at Columbia University, that the police rioted against the hippies in Chicago Fortunately, Hoffman had done nothing to cause these attacks: "Despite the then popular rhetoric about 'pigs' I always dealt one-to-one with those lined up behind the law"—a most curious claim. In 1969, Hoffman wrote a book called *Woodstock Nation,* the subject of which is the hope and promise of "WOODSTOCK NATION," the leading alternative to "PIG NATION" Amerika. Hoffman writes of being in Ann Arbor, Michigan with his fellow (and at that time, *real*) revolutionaries:

> There were about thirty of us on defense patrol ready to put into operation Plan B to fight the Pigs if they returned. We had about twenty or so weapons, an escape route, and well I just don't know what the f--k I'd do if they came back. It would be as good a place as any and as good a reason as any to blast my first Pig. I wondered what kind of jolt the shotgun would give. It was sure a pretty piece.

The police did not return, alas, so Hoffman missed his opportunity. As for that "pretty piece," in *Soon to be a Major Motion Picture* Hoffman protests that "guns and bombs were something completely alien

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to anything in my background."

During Hoffman's famous "Chicago Seven" conspiracy trial, the wealthy "Gold Coast" section of Chicago was the scene of the so-called "Days of Rage" riot. Hoffman tells us that he was "in the crowd" at the Lincoln Park rally preceding the riot, but makes no mention of where he was during the riot itself; he originally endorsed the riot, he tells us, but later was critical of it; he coined the term "Days of Rage," he tells us, but the Weathermen, an underground group, were really responsible for it. The net effect of this obfuscation, and indeed of much of the obfuscation in this book, is to minimize all the unpleasantness of the 1960s, and if this is too brazen, then at least to minimize the unpleasantness in which he himself took part. What we have left, if anything, is Abbie Hoffman as heroic figure, gleefully tilting at nasty windmills. As a memoir, the book is a miserable failure, because there is no consideration of motive, of why Hoffman did what he did; this would only undermine Hoffman's mythological creation of himself.

During the 1960s, of course, the motives and goals of counterculture radicals were taken very seriously. Government officials spoke of "near civil war conditions," and one need not read far in radical literature to find reference to fascist Amerika's attempts to crush the revolution. By contrast, today's myth of the hippie, in *Soon to be a Major Motion Picture, Hair,* and elsewhere, contends that we should no longer take the radicals so seriously. At first this seems enticing: It would allow us to breathe a little easier. After all, a failed revolution in most other countries results in the summary execution of its participants. But that is not how we do things, and so our dilemmas are how to treat the revolutionaries justly, yet mercifully, and later, how to think about them at all. That the revolutionaries were the nation's children only compounds the problem. How much easier simply to pretend that nothing had been really revolutionary, that there was no moral dimension to the ideas and actions of the radicals. We do not have to deny the *fact* of these actions; it is enough to deny them meaning. The kids were on a gay romp, trying "to deal one-to-one," and if there is blame to be laid, it is on the police, the national guard, and the government for *their* failure "to deal one-to-one."

But not everyone is willing today to find consolation in this falsehood. For all the critical acclaim, Forman's revival of *Hair* was a flop, and Hoffman's *Soon to be a Major Motion Picture* (with an introduction by Norman Mailer!) has not been a best-seller. And even the press, in a spirit bequeathed by the 1960s, described Hoffman's surrender-*cum*-media event *as* a "media event," designed to promote his book. In fact, they even suggested that Barry Freed's play at model citizenry might have been motivated by a desire to get a light sentence, or even to avoid any conviction at all. And if he was going to give himself up, why not get a little extra mileage out of it for his book? But in Hoffman's case, cynical manipulation undermined book sales.

Barbara Walters, at the end of the "20/20" interview, said she had asked Hoffman if the timing of his surrender had anything to do with the release of his book. She said that Hoffman told her that he would be crazy to give up his freedom for commercial gain. But did Hoffman really think he was giving up his freedom? At the end of *Soon to be a Major Motion Picture,* Hoffman provides us with a curious epilogue:

> Maybe I was wrong. . . . I hate drugs. They are bad for you. . . . Once I burned money at the stock exchange. This was way out of line. People work hard to make money. . . . Nuclear energy is clean and it's fun! . . . Our system of democracy is the best in the world. I don't know much about other systems, but if you pick up the newspaper or turn on the TV, all the others seem to be falling apart.

And so on for three and a half pages. At the conclusion of this litany, Hoffman gets to the point: "Now can I come back?" The answer he clearly expects, and the one consistent with the new 1960s mythology, is simply and conveniently: Come home, Abbie Hoffman. □

SURVIVING TOGETHER

by Patrick Wajsman

For four years, many Europeans criticized the diplomatic blunders of the White House, its chronic inability to follow a firm coherent course, its reversals, its improvisations, and—in a word—its weakness. And these critics were correct to criticize the first democracy on the planet and our most faithful ally: We have the right to demand of the United States more talent and more conviction in its defense of the free world.

What is even odder, however, is that some of the very men who even yesterday were castigating the weak Carter, already are beginning to criticize the strong Reagan. Beyond the President of the United States, could it therefore be America itself which troubles their elegant serenity?

Patrick Wajsman is editor of the French quarterly, Politique Internationale, *and a regular editorial writer for the daily,* Le Figaro, *from which this essay is reprinted.*

These secret Americanophobes, indeed, have a very curious way of thinking. With Ronald Reagan's strong leadership, they say, the European community will be "taken in hand" and will no longer, as in the past, be able to "make itself heard" and "oppose itself collectively to Washington." But why in heaven must we oppose ourselves systematically to our friends overseas? Is it so inconceivable that our interests and their should coincide? One can, if I am not mistaken, be a good European, a good German, a good Frenchman, without thinking that it is essential to dissociate oneself from the United States on every problem which concerns the future of the Atlantic world. General de Gaulle himself—the great scourge of hegemony—had understood that it is not enough to say no to the Americans to be independent. Had he not inscribed this profound conviction in history by supporting without conditions our friends and allies during the crises in Berlin and Cuba?

Once again I am not arguing here for alignment, servility, or allegiance towards Washington. The time for playing valet is over (except in the East, of course). But it seems to me that the election of a man as determined as Ronald Reagan offers Europeans a historical opportunity: the chance to establish with the United States a clear understanding founded on the sheer perception of a common future and unshackled by superficial pains of pride. For in the hour of the Soviet danger, calls of etiquette, conflicts of rank, and thin-skinned sensitivities are simply not appropriate in relations between the old and the new world. It is simply a matter of surviving together. And that deserves, without doubt, a slight effort.

In the first place, such an enterprise demands that we stop balking every time Washington asks us to increase our defense spending. For too long we have been living with a comfortable idea: "Let the United States pay most of the costs of the common defense, let Europe profit from the charms of détente." This division of labor (for you the stick, for us the carrot) is fundamentally unhealthy. So unhealthy that, disappointed by our sacred egoism, a number of American senators may well decide to revive the Mansfield amendment which recommended ten years ago that the number of GIs stationed in Europe be reduced. Is it necessary to indicate that neither Germany nor France, nor certainly the smaller countries, would leap for joy if such an event took place? Conclusion: The choice is ours.

A true trans-Atlantic partnership would also require that we define, with Washington, a strategy of containment and counterattack against Soviet expansion. This means that we

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must try to contain the imperial activities of the Soviet Union from one end of the world to the other. And, if possible, reconquer some of the lost ground.

Used to hearing the European political class carry on with words of appeasement and accomodation, a reader may judge such a suggestion utopian. And yet there are such ambitious action we could undertake with our American friends!

We could, first of all, decide to bring massive aid (especially in the form of arms) to all who courageously resist the Soviets or their Cuban mercenaries: the guerrillas of Jonas Savimbi in Angola or the partisans of Allah in Afghanistan.

Next, we could make more systematic use of the green weapon and not hesitate to decree a general embargo on the technological equipment which the lords of the Kremlin require for their development plans.

We could also make it clear to the masters of the Kremlin that we will not hesitate in the future to play the China card, and that if Moscow continues to send its tanks and its MiGs all over the world, we will explore the possibility of true military cooperation with Peking.

We could threaten to destabilize the Soviet Moslem republics by increasing what is known as psychological warfare.

Finally, we could reinforce, at whatever cost, the more exposed links of the non-Marxist world (Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Pakistan, South Africa, Thailand) and thus demonstrate to the Soviets the full extent of our commitments.

Let the reader understand me. I am not saying that all means of pressure should be used at once. I am not even saying that they are the only ones available, but simply that there ought to exist on both sides of the Atlantic a consensus on the soundness of such methods. The incoherence of Jimmy Carter gave the Europeans a wonderful pretext to do nothing that might make the Kremlin unhappy. How, they said in Paris and Bonn, can one follow a man whose strategy changes as quickly as the weather? Today this pretext no longer exists. But the leaders of the Old World are still going to have to make choices.

To conclude, the trans-Atlantic partnership will really know its hour of glory only if Americans and Europeans agree to join together, without second thoughts, behind the principle of non-competition in politics. Simply put, this means that every time Washington is in a better position than Europe to advance the cause of peace, the community should either discreetly retire or support the American initiative. And vice-versa.

This rule, unfortunately, is seldom followed, as can be seen by an example which hardly is to our credit: In the Arab-Israeli conflict the European community, for many months, has been trying to cut the ground from under the Americans by criticizing the Camp David process while loudly demanding an illusory "global solution." Why? To please the terrorists of the PLO? To win favors from the oil-producing states? To bring the USSR back into the process? To have the satisfaction of being present at the great banquet of reconciliation? For thirty years the Europeans have showed themselves to be totally incapable of advancing the cause of peace in the Middle East. Was it clever to choose to give lessons in diplomacy to Cairo, or to Jerusalem, or especially, to Washington, at the very moment when the hope of peace was finally returning? Again: This is not the way we should practice solidarity.

For too long the nations of the free world have behaved like members of a club. It is time they form a team. □

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BOOK REVIEWS

AMERICAN DREAM GLOBAL NIGHTMARE: THE DILEMMA OF U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY

Sandy Vogelgesang / Norton / $13.95

Arch Puddington

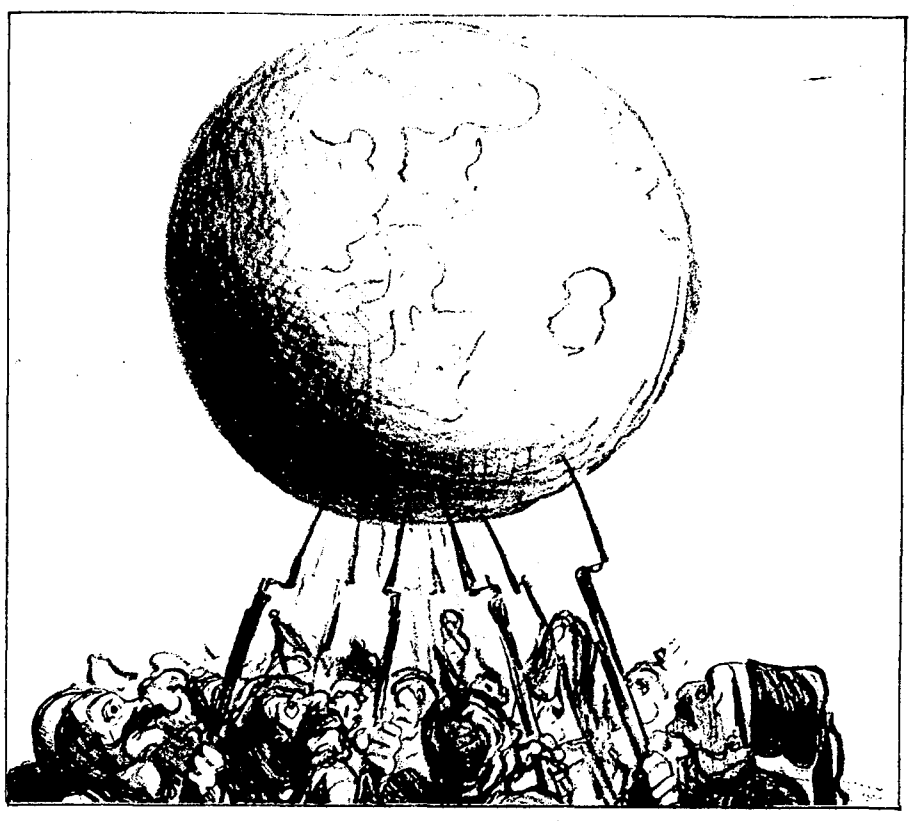
Even though Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter held sharply differing views on the question, human rights was largely ignored as a political issue during the presidential campaign. This was in marked contrast to 1976, when candidate Carter accused Gerald Ford and Henry Kissinger of having abandoned moral principle in the conduct of foreign affairs. Ironically enough, it was the Ford administration's seeming blindness to repression in the Soviet bloc, rather than U.S. policy toward Chile or South Africa, which was exploited most effectively by the Democrat. Ford's refusal to grant an audience to Solzhenitsyn, the furor over the Sonnenfeldt Doctrine, the incredible gaffe about Polish self-determination —these and other manifestations of the administration's overscrupulous adherence to the "code of détente" made it easy for Carter to differentiate his foreign policy approach from Ford's without losing his credentials as a supporter of détente. As the candidate of a party strongly influenced by people who believe anti-Communism to be outmoded and even indecent, it was no small accomplishment to dispel the notion that he would be insufficiently firm in dealings with the Russians. Thus for Carter the human rights issue served a dual purpose: It was a useful and entirely appropriate weapon to wield against Ford's policies and it was a tool for building personal support in a party in which followers of Henry Jackson and George McGovern live in uneasy coexistence.

Surprisingly, once in office, Carter seemed to follow through on his promise to make the spread of human rights the foundation of his foreign policy: Communist regimes were made the target of several visible gestures—the exchange of letters with Dr. Sakharov and the declaration of support for Charter 77 among the most important. But other signals sent out by the new administration conflicted with Carter's apparent determination to adhere to his campaign pledges: The responsibility for formulating human rights policy was handed over to men and women with antiwar backgrounds, strong Third World orientations, or both. It was also discovered that an increasingly assertive Congress had ideas of its own on human rights: It attached human rights criteria to a number of trade and international assistance bills, and mandated the publication of an annual report card assessing the state of human rights in countries receiving American aid.

From these auspicious beginnings matters have declined to the point where many politicians would just as soon see the whole issue disappear. Even though the past four years have seen some of the most shocking cases of calculated butchery ever witnessed by mankind, not to mention mass expulsions of ethnic minorities and a relentless and carefully orchestrated assault on Western democratic values, human rights now appears a less compelling idea than when Jimmy Carter took office.

This is not to say that the Carter record is without its share of successes. The problem is that American pressure has produced notable improvements only in countries favorably disposed (or at least not hostile) to the United States, and, for the most part, these can hardly be called brutal tyrannies. The human rights violations of Ecuador and the Dominican Republic—where we succeeded in persuading military leaders to permit democratically elected governments to assume office—pale in comparison to the mass killings and wholesale repressions carried out by avowed enemies like Cambodia, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Vietnam.

This posed no special dilemma for the Carter administration, which tended to regard human rights questions as separate and distinct from other aspects of American foreign policy and was particularly determined not to equate concern for human rights with anti-Communism. "Human rightsism" was to replace anti-Communism as the moral basis of American global conduct, and so it was perfectly all right to criticize the Soviet Union for its persecution of dissidents or to make an issue of Vietnam's expulsion of the boat people, at the same time that care was taken to avoid drawing any connection between acts of repression and the political system of the countries committing them. Thus, when it became clear that these policies were not designed to deal with (and to a certain degree diverted our attention from) new and frightening geopolitical realities, public support for human rights began to disintegrate. Contributing to this skepticism were Carter's illusions about the Soviet Union. Initially, Carter assumed that he could denounce Soviet repression and also pursue trade, disarmament, and other aspects of détente. But when it became obvious that human rights posed a roadblock to improved relations, he began a quiet disengagement from earlier commitments; by the time of the recent Polish events, he was chastising the AFL-CIO for providing assistance to the new independent unions and apologizing to Soviet officials for the conduct of American unions.



Sandy Vogelgesang also believes that the Carter human rights policy has fallen short of its potential, but for reasons radically different from those sketched out here. In her view, a human rights policy which focuses on "crimes against the security of the person" and on civil and political rights as traditionally defined in the West lacks global credibility, since it ignores the economic and social rights which Third World countries are said to value most highly. She is not alone in this conviction; no less a figure than former Secretary of State Vance has endorsed "the right to the fulfillment of such vital needs as food, shelter, health care, and education" as the ultimate goals of American human rights policy.

There are many reasons why the United States should promote the economic advancement of underdeveloped countries and, in some instances, a fairer distribution of resources within these countries. But

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to act on the assumption that these goals, particularly as advocated by Third World elites, are compatible and even coextensive with human rights, will only undermine human rights in the name of strengthening them. For those elites, and for their New Left cheerleaders, economic development and redistribution are part and parcel of the New International Economic Order, a scheme which has nothing whatsoever to do with human rights, and which would only further entrench Third World elites domestically. The evidence, in fact, clearly suggests that countries which observe civil and political rights do a better job economically and socially. On the other hand, one can hardly find an authoritarian regime which does not cite economic development as an excuse for its repression, whether the goal be "building the revolution" or creating "an economic miracle." And on this question, Vogelgesang displays a great deal of confusion, stemming largely from her tortured attempts to portray Third World demands as compatible with American values and interests.

This book would have been less muddled had Vogelgesang simply delivered a straightforward defense of the New Left's ideas on human rights. Instead, her effort to synthesize Western and Third World conceptions has produced a bewildering array of arguments built on misconceptions, evasion, and fudging. A typical example is her assertion that in post-Selassie Ethiopia, "violent methods have often been used to redress the previous imbalance in economic and social rights," when in fact, it is the murder of political rivals and ethnic minorities, and not land reform, that Colonel Mengistu and his henchmen have been about. One wonders what delicate phraseology the author would have employed to explain Stalin's efforts to resolve Russia's agricultural problems in the 1930s.

Not that Vogelgesang is an apologist for the Soviets. Like other members of the new foreign affairs elite (Vogelgesang serves as a policy planner in the State Department), she is properly critical of the social controls imposed by the Soviet government and its persecution of dissidents. But she believes, here again reflecting the accepted wisdom of many other young Carter administration officials, that it is the North-South relation that is paramount in the struggle for human rights, and hence must be isolated at all costs from the American-Soviet rivalry.

One need not be a dedicated Cold Warrior to understand the simple-mindedness of this proposition. Straightforward humanitarianism is all that is required to recognize that those committing the most flagrant crimes against individual human beings share a common ideology and an allegiance to the great totalitarian powers; that these powers (or their surrogates) are responsible for training and funding the terrorist movements which pose so great a menace to Western democracy; and that the people living under these systems repeatedly display their hatred of them by trying to leave—by boat, through jungles, in automobile trunks—or by trying to bring the system down. There is a direct, organic relationship between Communism and the threats to fundamental human rights. In fact, the prevention of any further spread of the Soviet Union's monstrous power will be the most effective guarantee of human rights in the Third World. This will require, among other things, a recognition that there are times when a firm military posture is an essential weapon for human rights.

I realize that to suggest a link between military capability and human rights is, in some circles, to speak the unspeakable. Typically enough, Vogelgesang identifies human rights with disarmament and "reordering priorities." Such views are symptomatic of the weaknesses which hampered the Carter human rights policy. Slogans, cant, and sentimentality have made it easy to avoid addressing the exact source of the problem. Too many people involved in the human rights struggle have been sustained by comfortable assumptions about the world in which the exercise of power does not figure at all. Such assumptions can only pose a threat to human rights. □

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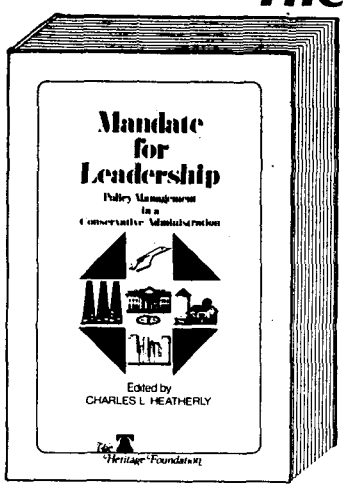

When advance copies of this book were delivered to President-elect Reagan's transition office the week after the election, everyone started talking. This "extraordinarily detailed guideline for the Reagan team" (New York Times) contains, "not vague theorizing, but chapter and verse specifics, the nitty gritty of the Right way to govern" (Dallas Morning News). This "blueprint for grabbing the government by its frayed New Deal lapels and shaking out 48 years of liberal policies" (United Press International) is "unprecedented in its scope and depth" (new budget director David Stockman). Outgoing Senator Birch Bayh calls it "most disturbing," while incoming Counselor to the President Edwin Meese finds it "very impressive."

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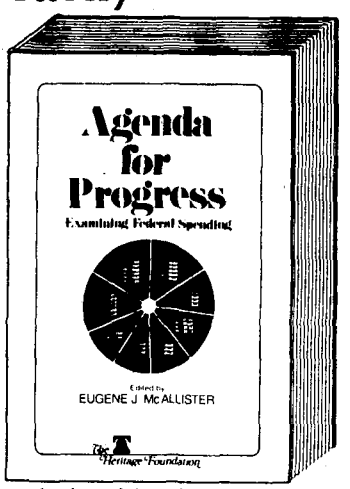

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THE SPIKE

Arnaud de Borchgrave and Robert Moss / Crown / $12.95

Mitchell S. Ross

The Spike is old news by now but before long it will be back on the racks in paperback and browsers will have their thoughts sandblasted by advertisements and displays which suggest that reading *The Spike* is good for your political health. The book's great success in hardcover derived in large measure from its having been convincingly promoted as more than just another thriller. The authors are two well-connected international journalists who received aid in selling their book from blurbists in high places. Here is an opinion from Richard Helms, former director of the CIA: "*The Spike* is a well-written, fast-paced novel dealing with what the Russians call disinformation. It deals with a challenge posed to America and the Free World: Can the Soviets destroy the West without firing a shot?" And an opinion from Osborn Elliott, former editor of *Newsweek,* where he was Arnaud de Borchgrave's boss, now Dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University: "*The Spike* is so convincing that it's hard to tell where fact leaves off and fiction begins."

Many reviewers took the same tone and *The Spike* became respectable reading for highbrows interested in public affairs. Was this a beneficial development? Here is Ross's Rundown on the celebrated thriller, offered by a stern critic in highly categorical terms:

1) Plot: Ranges in quality from predictable to lamebrained. Young Bob Hockney, an admiral's son, is radicalized while a student at Berkeley in the late sixties. Resolving to improve the world through journalism, he endeavors to expose the deviltries of the CIA for a radical journal called *Barricades*. His first major piece inspires the suicide of a CIA operative, and Hockney is recruited onto the staff of the *New York World,* a great liberal newspaper. He makes it to Vietnam and to Elaine's restaurant; also into bed with an actress whose half-wittedness finds full expression in radical politics. He becomes a celebrity in his own right.

Finally, in the mid-seventies, while the Senate is busy slashing at the CIA, Hockney meets up with the freshly deposed CIA chief of counter-intelligence. Despite his shabby tailoring and a case of acute alcoholism, the ex-spook manages to turn Hockney's head with tales of Soviet espionage and American traitors. Particularly fetching is the proposition that Hockney's oldest friend is the biggest traitor of all.

Once converted, Hockney becomes a burden to his editors at the *World* and parts company with them. Poor in pocket but rich in self-esteem he carries on, ultimately vindicating himself and shattering the bumpkin presidency of one Billy Connor by assisting in the defection and public unveiling of a leading KGB man. Hockney is almost always the focus of the narrative, and so the tale as a whole reads as a sort of potboiling pilgrim's progress.

2) Characterization: Dull at best, as in the rendering of Hockney, who is little more than so much ideological jello, re-refrigerated in mid-saga. Far worse than the portrayal of Hockney, however, is the depiction of many characters with real-life models. This is perhaps the aspect of the book which forced Osborn Elliott to start scratching his head. Certainly it is an aesthetic atrocity. A good *roman à clef* will entice and charm the reader by dropping spicy hints about familiar folk. De Borchgrave and Moss are content to reenforce prejudices formed while reading newspapers. Thus the aforementioned CIA counterintelligence chief is a dead ringer for James Angleton, as portrayed by the press during his brief (and no doubt extremely painful) hour in the sun a few years ago. But by grafting the media's version of Angleton onto an outlandish fictional plot, injustices are surely committed against both the real Angleton and the integrity of the art of fiction.

I recognize that this is a tricky business. There are after all some good recent examples of real-life characters being successfully introduced into fictional narrative. Two which come to mind are E.L. Doctorow's *Ragtime,* and, perhaps more to the point in the present case, the Allen Dulles-Dean Acheson scenes in William F. Buckley, Jr.'s spy novels. In Doctorow and Buckley, however, the real-life characters are drawn larger than life, whereas in *The Spike* they are without exception smaller than life. This injects a spirit of petty vulgarity into the tale which the sophisticated reader ought to resent. It is not enough for the authors to hide behind name changes when the inferences are so clear. I won't take the space to recite the many instances of this practice in *The Spike*. They are numerous and they are annoying without exception.

3) Journalistic usefulness: extremely limited. *The Spike* is not a serious exposé of Soviet disinformation hung on a novelistic peg. It is a novel—and not a very good one at that—which exploits the disinformation theme for its own sensational purposes. There are a few passages, usually confessions, which give off an authentic ring. A decent short essay might be strung together out of them. Otherwise there is no fresh psychological or sociological insight to be found here. We never learn, for example, why Hockney's friend, who rises to the position of Deputy National Security adviser while all along working for the Russians, sells his soul in this way. Hockney merely wonders, and so do we. Of disinformation as a whole, we learn more or less what it involves, and we are left to suppose that it exists. Big deal.

4) Stylistic distinction: none. Truly fine style involves a marriage between powers of observation and powers of language. *The Spike* is dim in both respects. The prose is bestseller-breathless with a few truly awful adornments. "The territorial imperative was enforced with a vengeance at Elaine's. He reflected that just as in the wilds animals will defecate to warn off potential intruders from the territory they have staked out for themselves, so at Elaine's the babble of voices must warn off outsiders who did not belong to the tribe." (This by the way is incorrect. I used to live around the corner from Elaine's: The place is not all that exclusive.)

Enough. Far from being a book that every budding anti-Communist should have on his shelf, *The Spike* can be warmly recommended only to those who are paranoid beyond recall and to those who keep a Frank Church dartboard in their basement. The answer it provides to Richard Helms's question—can the Soviets destroy the West without firing a shot?—is: maybe, if Fred Harris were to be elected president and Billy Carter were to become his chief of staff. And, as for Osborn Elliott's inability to tell "where fact leaves off and fiction begins," this is no more troubling than our own inability to tell where Elliott the editor left off and Elliott the doddering dean began. Kill this book. □

Mitchell S. Ross is the author of The Literary Politicians *and* An Invitation to our Times.

LYNDON: AN ORAL BIOGRAPHY

Merle Miller / Putnam / $17.95

Alonzo L. Hamby

Some years ago, I spent a few particularly beautiful autumn days in Asheville, North Carolina, attending the annual meeting of the Oral History Association. The keynote speaker was Merle Miller, still enjoying the good fortune and recognition that had come from the publication of his taped interviews with Harry S Truman. It was not a good night for the distinguished guest. Either Allegheny or Piedmont, or possibly both in collusion, had managed to lose his suitcase; he was tieless, disheveled, and hardly in a mood to deliver inspiration to an after-dinner audience. On one or two occasions, he indicated the height of his own spirits by alluding fondly to the martinis he had earlier consumed with his hosts.

His talk had little to do with matters—such as interviewing techniques and experiences—that one might presume to be of interest to

Alonzo L. Hamby is chairman of the Department of History at Ohio University.

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oral historians. Providing no discernible beginning, nor any perceptible ending, our speaker rambled on about his own life, examining in some hilarious detail the difficulties of existence as an avowed homosexual, among them his relationship with his mother. Harry Truman was mentioned in passing. When Miller had concluded, the mistress of ceremonies thanked him for what she described, apparently in all sincerity, as an extraordinarily thoughtful address. I recount this episode for what it can tell us about the limitations of both Merle Miller and the oral history movement.

Oral history emerged as a technique of professional scholarship in the years after World War II. It was greatly facilitated by, although not really dependent on, the development of the high-fidelity tape recorder; and it grew out of a widespread and relatively new conviction that it was possible to write scholarly history about the very recent past. In one sense, oral history represented the professoriat's formal adoption of the ancient journalistic technique of the interview. But it was not to be mere journalism, which most academics assumed to be shallow and ephemeral. It would involve instead the interviewing of important figures by credentialed scholars, the production of formal, carefully edited transcripts, and the deposit of the finished product in a library, where it would remain available to all qualified researchers on equal terms.

Promoted by the renowned historian Allan Nevins, the idea achieved its first and fullest realization at Columbia University in the 1950s. Scholars and graduate students, working at times on their own research, at times on specially funded projects, conducted detailed interviews with subjects who had systematically refreshed their memories and who from time to time read excerpts from diaries or other personal papers into the record. One of Nevins' young students, Dean Albertson, created exemplary standards for oral historians with a series of lengthy interviews with officials from the New Deal agricultural program, among them Henry A. Wallace.

When I was a graduate student in the early 1960s, my dissertation supervisor all but required a trip to the Columbia Oral History Collection. The many first-rate interviews I located compensated for the thinner stuff, the off-the-top-of-the-head gossip. As I visited other institutions, I discovered that the national norm was closer to the thin stuff than to Columbia's best. I also learned that oral history was no substitute for *history;* it was simply another tool for the working historian, useful especially for color, anecdotes, and impressions of personalities. After some experience of my own both as an interviewer and a participant at oral history meetings, I found myself mistaken for an expert in the field, particularly by colleagues wanting to set up projects of their own. After all, no credentialing process formally conferred the title "oral historian," and it was assumed that the whole business involved little more than thrusting a microphone at the mouth of a talkative historical figure.

Enter Merle Miller.

When he published *Plain Speaking: An Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman* in 1973, Miller already was a figure of some note, the author of eleven books, fiction and non-fiction, and countless short pieces. Yet it took *Plain Speaking* to bring him a mass audience. Culled from taped background interviews Miller had conducted a dozen years earlier while working as a television production assistant, the book appealed to a Watergate-weary audience yearning for a leader with Truman's down-to-earth virtues. To be sure, the interviewing was amateurish, the presentation uncritical, and the facts at times questionable. The tapes themselves remain unavailable. By the standards of good oral history, the book left much to be desired; it was "biography" only in that the subject had chatted about himself. All that mattered little: Miller had captured Truman's vivid personality, *Plain Speaking* was a great success, and an accomplished journalist had suddenly become an oral historian. It was only natural to try again.

Who was even earthier than Harry Truman? Lyndon Johnson, of course. But there was an obvious problem. By the time Miller began work on his second "oral biography," LBJ had departed to a land far beyond the range of any tape recorder. Miller's solution was to draw upon over 300 of the Johnson presidential library's taped interviews with the late president's associates, and to supplement these with 180 interviews of his own. As Miller describes it, the result was reminiscent of Thomas Wolfe: "a huge suitcase full of most of an early draft" requiring four month's of editorial ministrations by a female Maxwell Perkins at Miller's "glass house" in Brewster, New York.

The outcome of all this work is both disappointing and irritating. It is

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impossible to tell how much of the final product is derived from the Johnson library interviews and how much from Miller's own—a major annoyance to those who believe that a historian should cite sources for his quotations. One wonders also about the seriousness of Miller's efforts when he mentions that one of his interviews with Lady Bird Johnson occurred "in a car driving around the Ranch, Stonewall, Texas," another with Lynda Johnson Robb transpired "at a party at her home in McLean, Virginia," and two with Luci Johnson Nugent were taped "at two parties at her home." Admittedly, these would be pedantic quibbles had Miller not left the impression that he now considers himself a master oral historian.

Even more infuriating is Miller's inability to bring anything fresh and new to *Lyndon*. Anyone familiar with Johnson has heard it all before. A few stories were new to me—I'll confess to particularly liking the one about the attractive one-night stand to whom vice-presidential aspirant LBJ declared in gratitude, "Ah want to thank you for yore help to mah campaign." Unfortunately, it also demonstrates what is wrong with the book. Miller got the story, he tells us, from "people who know, who were, presumably, there." But who were they and how could they have been there? The young lady, we are led to believe, was an anonymous groupie, hardly the sort to have been available for an interview 15 years or so later. And even if Miller did talk to her, she must have been ample indeed if she can be described as "people." Miller's use of source material is characterized throughout by the same infantile level of credulity.

Actually, a genuine oral biography of LBJ has already been published: *Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream* by Doris Kearns. Although not a perfect book, at least it is based on direct, frank, and intimate contact with its subject, whom it quotes extensively and with a ring of authenticity. It makes use of the interview as a scholarly work should—not as end product, or even sole source, but as one of many methods for obtaining information about the subject. Using the results of her interviews, Miss Kearns takes some pretty good stabs at explaining what sort of a person Johnson was, how he got that way, and why in the end his administration failed. But so far as I know, the author has displayed no interest in establishing herself as a Leading Oral Historian.

The definitive work on Lyndon Johnson remains to be written. Johnson deserves the attention of someone like the late T. Harry Williams, who at the time of his death was in the process of creating a genuine oral biography of LBJ which would have described him in all his enormousness—his vulgarity, his vanity, his insecurity, his insatiable appetites. But what is more—and here oral history cannot help us—we need a biographer capable of explaining how a president, given an overwhelming vote of confidence by the American people, could persist in decisions that extended social welfare liberalism to the breaking point, nearly wrecked a flourishing economy, and destroyed the nation's sense of purpose in world affairs.

Lyndon has done well at the bookstores, largely because it exemplifies the *People* magazine school of gossip so influential in American popular culture. Those who approach it with a serious purpose are bound to be disappointed. The oral history movement, however confused it may be about its own standards, deserves better. We all deserve better. □

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IDEAS AND THE NOVEL

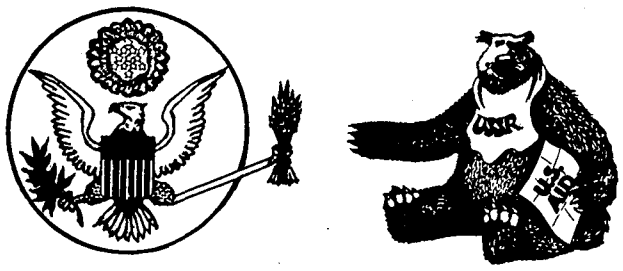
Mary McCarthy / Harcourt Brace Jovanovich / $7.95

William H. Nolte

Miss McCarthy begins the first of these four brilliant lectures with a delightful quotation guaranteed to make the cognoscenti slap their shanks and leap with joy: "He had a mind so fine that no idea could violate it." T.S. Eliot, of course, writing of Henry James. Using the quotation (intended by Eliot as high praise of The Master) as a motto, or rather counter-motto, for the reflections that follow, Miss McCarthy proceeds to "take exception, not to the truth of Eliot's prouncement (he was right about James), but to the set of lofty assumptions calmly towering behind it." If she employs James as a foil and as a point of departure for her discussion of the great nineteenth-century novelists, who without exception considered ideas as being intrinsic to the novelistic medium, she by no means seeks simply to dispose of him or write him off as an odd mutation. But her assessment of his achievements will certainly ruffle the feathers of devout Jamesians, a sensitive breed (*Gallus* gallus) given to defending the Old Pretender with tart rejoinders. As one who on occasion has publicly remarked the artful emptiness of James's fictions, I can attest to the decorous wrath of the True Believers.

To be sure, Miss McCarthy is hardly the first critic to note that when James "purified" the novel and thereby elevated it to a high art form he was actually performing a procrustean act. In effect, he not only rendered it of all fatty tissue but also lopped off its arms and legs, disembowelled it, drained it of all its human juices, and—to banish any ideological content—cut off its head. Which is to say, in a less anatomical fashion, he cleansed his fictive art of both mind and matter, of the things of this world and of any ideas we might have about those things. As Miss McCarthy puts it, he scraped "his sacred texts clean of the material factor." Certainly no small achievement since his novels are frequently concerned (in a very general way) with property and money; moreover, his tales are played out "almost exclusively in the realm of the social, mundane by definition." He did what no other novelist had done, or even considered doing, before: He turned the novel into an *objet d'art*—lifeless

William H. Nolte is C. Wallace Martin Professor of English at the University of South Carolina.



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as a stone and empty as a jug. Even when she exaggerates the baleful effect of James's example, Miss McCarthy's blade strikes fire, as in this: "He etherealized the novel beyond its wildest dreams and perhaps etherized it as well."

Concerning the extent of James's influence or legacy, Miss McCarthy seems to be of two minds. In saying that he did this or that to "the novel," she implies that he changed the course of the art form, and changed it for the worse; but almost in the same breath she notes various major writers who seem to have been impervious to his example. Salient examples come to mind at once: Mann's *The Magic Mountain,* Malraux's *Man's Fate,* Huxley's *Point Counterpoint* (indeed all of Huxley), the fiction of Sartre and Iris Murdoch, the highly didactic novels of Solzhenitsyn, and many others she does not name. In truth, James's influence has been slight. After all, novelists still include in their stories all that James barred as extraneous—including the discussion of ideas. D.H. Lawrence, for instance, ended by writing tracts or sermons, which is paradoxical when you consider that Lawrence abhorred the intellect, or "upper story" as he called it.

Only in recent years, Miss McCarthy argues in her final chapter, has the "novel of ideas" been sent to Coventry, although dispensation has been granted to the Jewish novel. Just why the goys are confined to playing with images while the likes of Bellow, Malamud, and Philip Roth are free to juggle ideas Miss McCarthy doesn't say. She simply concludes, rather too hastily and unconvincingly, with the assertion that for the novel to be revitalized it will be necessary "to disarm and disorient reviewers and teachers of literature, who, as always, are the reader's main foe." If reviewers were given better books to review I daresay they would note the fact, and the pedagogues are generally too abstruse (or obtuse) to have much effect on anyone but themselves. Better reasons for the sad state of contemporary fiction can surely be found.

What makes this slender volume worth the price is the simple fact that Miss McCarthy has something important to say about important books and, above all, knows how to say it in a sharp and fresh manner. I had never quite realized the extent to which such writers as Stendhal, Tolstoy, Hugo, Dostoevsky, Flaubert, and Balzac were concerned with ideas, or—in the case of Stendhal and Dostoevsky—with showing the evil effects ideas may have. Miss McCarthy is at her best when she shows how Dostoevsky, in *The Possessed,* was drawn to dangerous ideas "as if to a potent drug," or how Stendhal, in *The Red and the Black,* probably intended Julien Sorel's career as "a wicked analogy with the career of Jesus." She also describes the great interest novelists of the period had in Napoleon, not just as Emperor, but as Idea. Hegel, at Jena, had called Napoleon "an idea on horseback"; later, in *War and Peace,* Tolstoy sought to cut that Idea down to size.

Ideas and the Novel is a vigorous and forthright little book about a matter of importance to all readers of books. If we are moved more by the idea of things than by the things themselves, then there would certainly seem to be a place in fiction for ideas. After all, fiction, unlike the visual arts, must feed off mental constructs if it is to have weight in the world or do more than idly entertain. Without ideological content, a novel will invariably leave the withers unwrung. □

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CRACKERS

Roy Blount, Jr. / Knopf / $10.95

Theo Lippman, Jr.

Poor Roy Blount. He comes out with this adoring campaign biography of Jimmy Carter and whammo! down goes Carter to the worst defeat any incumbent president has ever suffered. I know just how he feels. I am, as you all know, the man who wrote successive campaign biographies of Edmund Muskie, Spiro Agnew, and Edward Kennedy.

"Adoring" is a word of the art. Book reviewers use it to show that the author likes his subject even though they do not. I think it is overused. Sure, I didn't mention Chappaquiddick in *Senator Ted Kennedy,* but that wasn't because I wanted to show him in an adorable light. You can't get *everything* in. I just thought his speech on the 1966 Public Works Appropriations Bill was more significant.

Roy Blount adores Jimmy Carter because they are both Georgians. I do not because I am a Georgian. He thinks Jimmy Carter's election ennobled what he calls Crackro-Americans. *"We ain't trash no more!"* his brother-in-law hollered when Jimmy Carter was nominated. That was the right note, says Blount. Actually his brother-in-law is from East Texas, but that's a quibble. All regional sociologists agree that East Texas is quite Georgian—better than South Georgia but worse than North Georgia. Anyway, ennobled may be the wrong word. What Blount says the election of Jimmy Carter was was "vindication" of a people who "have blithely been called rednecks, Crackers, white trash, Snopeses, and peckerwoods" for years. "Our people" had finally produced a presidential persona who in 1980 as in 1976 was superior to Ronald Reagan, John Anderson, and Ted Kennedy and who *"still* hasn't caused any shooting anywhere," a noble, adorable accomplishment last achieved by Herbert Hoover.

But the way I look at it is that "our people" are now being blamed for Carteresque (and Lance-esque and Jordan-esque and Jody Powell-esque) failures that are the result not of Georgian attributes but of the personal, individual shortcomings of their perpetrators. Let's face it. The Carter administration has given Crackers a bad name. Even in Georgia. The voters of Georgia just

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showed their disgust with Georgia pols by defeating a Talmadge for the first time in 38 years—voting for a Republican to represent them in the U.S. Senate (for the first time since Reconstruction) whose sole qualification is that he was born and raised in Indiana! The last non-native Georgian elected to the Senate down there was born in Ireland in 1840. You think this is a joke? It isn't. I'm told by serious political journalists and academics in Atlanta that Talmadge was winning till he attacked his opponent as "a carpetbagger." "Oh? He's not a Georgian? Let's vote for *him*," everybody said.

As a rule even good campaign biographies about successful candidates quickly vanish. My *Spiro Agnew's America* is still required reading in the history of Maryland course at the University of Maryland, but that is an exception. I am told the students get quite a chuckle out of the chapter on Ted and Judy's noble struggle to make ends meet on his salary. Which brings me to the real thing about Blount's book. It is *funny*. He is a Cracker Woody Allen, and he is funniest when he digresses from Carter and politics and government. Most of his stories are too long and too scatological to be quoted in context in a review of this length for a family-oriented journal. Here's a clean short one:

I once talked to a man in a Southern truck stop who claimed that his father had "left all his money, and his body, to Sammy Davis Jr. He figured it would p--s everybody off; including Sammy Davis Jr. What was Sammy Davis Jr. going to do with $1,700 and a shriveled up old white man? Whereas we could have used the money. Course we overthrew it and Sammy Davis Jr. didn't even enter into it. But the lawyers charged $2,400.

Blount is funny when he doesn't digress, too. I think this explanation of how Carter got elected in the first place makes as much sense as anything Roger Mudd ever said and is a lot more entertaining:

One interpretation is that Satan or Godless Communism or the Trilateral Commission or the Bavarian Illuminati or whatever you want to call it said, "Hey! here's something we could do. Take some poor son of a bitch from Georgia and make him President." . . . So find a Georgia Candidate. A Georgia Candidate with a proudly no-account Georgia brother. A Georgia Candidate whose Georgia press relations man has the same first name as the boy in "The Yearling" and is actually more flip publicly than the press. A Georgia Candidate whose top Georgia lieutenant has the same last name as a holy river and is likely to take a few sips and act childish. A Georgia Candidate whose key black supporter is a Georgian who wears nice suits and says things like, "When the lights go out, folks will steal." A Georgia Candidate whose Georgia banker friend pulls so-called money out of the big city air (where the Power wants to keep it) and turns it into liberal, actually spendable confederate credit for his neighbors in Calhoun. Take a bunch of Georgians like that and *let them "run the country."* . . . The time when nobody in the *world* knows how to administer America *would* be the time when Georgians get a chance at it.

Funny, insightful, but sure to be taken as *defensive* by most Americans. And wrong. The last part I mean. Most Americans do *not* believe the answer to the question Why Not the Best? in re 1977-1981 is that "nobody in the *world*" knows how to do a good job in the White House. Most Americans (or at least a great many, according to all the pollsters) believe the greatest man ever to come out of Plains, Georgia, and his ilk were just not very competent.

Roy Blount, Jr. is the most talented campaign biographer since Lew Wallace, who celebrated his fellow Indianan Benjamin Harrison with *Life of Ben Harrison by the Author of Ben Hur*, but not even he can overcome what his idol has done to the reputation of Georgians. □

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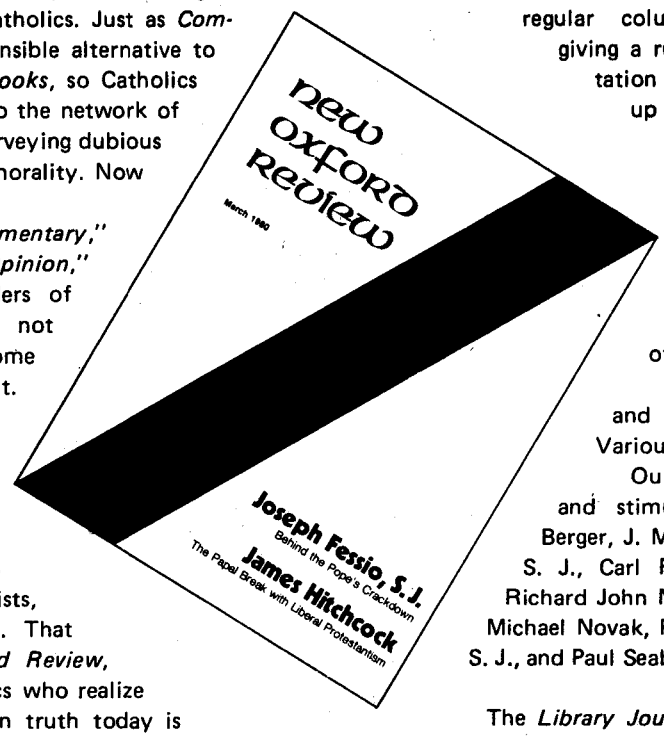

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EDITORIAL

(*continued from page 5*)

course not, but he had packed his government with the champions of every New Age cause. There were the famous like Dr. Peter Bourne, Andy Young, and Midge Costanza. Then there were the deeply committed like Sam Brown, Joan Claybrook, and in foreign policy every McGovernite not then employable by a rock band.

Today ingrates like Jack Newfield earnestly declare, "We must understand that the main reason Carter was defeated was because he was an incompetent *conservative* president." But the facts put the donkey's tail on Newfield once again. As an Associated Press story in January demonstrated, "Jimmy hired outside agitators and made them inside agitators." In the words of Sam Brown, once the organizer of the Vietnam Moratorium and Eugene McCarthy's 1968 campaign, Jimmy "trained a whole generation, which will be back." More than 50 public interest pests from the Nader camorra were given powerful government positions under the Wonderboy. The regulations, the lawsuits, the general asininity brought to government by them should be a matter of pride with New Age liberals.

Yet the oily Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. is emphatic: "What the voters repudiated in 1980 was not liberalism but the miserable result of the conservative economic policies of the last half-dozen years." Arthur has apparently forgotten the huge growth in regulations, in transfer payments, in infringments upon personal liberty. This was progress! He has also forgotten the glorious birth of the Department of Education and the Department of Energy, the violent struggles to create a Consumer Protection Nanny, and a Department of Natural Resources. There were the threats against the corporations. There were CETA grants, food stamps; onward, ever onward. Arthur gives Jimmy a bum rap.

Perhaps Arthur is angered that Jimmy did not go far enough. After all he never tried wage and price controls. Then too, there is the discomfort of being associated with such an obvious mountebank. Yet he can relax; most New Age liberals are mountebanks. Surely Arthur does not believe in the egalitarian hallucination and all the ancillary fantasies that go with it. Finally, Arthur may be distraught over the great historic fact of the Carter Administration. Under the Wonderboy practically every New Age prescription—certainly every foreign policy prescription—simply blew up.

In foreign policy the New Age liberals' insistence on accomodation, legalism, negotiations, "openness," disarmament, and so forth was greeted by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Iranian barbarism, the proxy wars in Africa, growing turbulence in Central America, and the fissures in NATO. In the end Cy Vance was heard sniffling over SALT's demise, despite the clear evidence that SALT had not sweetened the Soviet paranoiacs nor halted their vast arms buildup, the most massive peacetime buildup in history. The Iranian barbarism put the lie to all the New Age liberals' guff about restraint, understanding, and Third-World innocence. The ghastly holocaust in Southeast Asia showed what hollow and perverse guff it had always been.

In domestic policy the gigantic costs of the New Age's programs for perfect justice, perfect safety, perfect dreaminess, grew and impoverished the citizenry. The tax burden rose. So did unemployment. So did inflation. Hockey fans might call this the presidential hat trick. No other president had accomplished it in this century. Not even Herbert Hoover.

Here was the age of the little scamp and the great denial. The scamp clawed his way to the White House mouthing bromides he never understood. His New Age coconspirators first denied that anything was amiss and then denied any responsibility for the crash. It has been one of the greatest acts of denial in the twentieth century. Southeast Asia is not their fault. Our economy is not their fault. Iran is not their fault. Our diminished place in a dangerous world is not their fault. It is all of a piece with the whole thrust of their thought, which in its maundering about a sexless society, a sunny egalitarian utopia, is a colossal and affecting denial of reality.

The Wonderboy, of course, did not believe in reality either. With pluck and bathos he talked his way into Lincoln's House. He talked his way into Christian saintliness. He talked his way into greatness. In time he was a patron of the arts, fluent in Spanish, a jogger and skier. One wonders. When he collapsed during that foot race or when he fell from his skis, did he learn anything about the difficulty of things? I doubt it. During his whole bizarre regime, as the dollar sank and the Russians marched, there emanated from him the sense that nothing really mattered. Nothing beyond himself was real. There was no Iran, no Southeast Asia, no Russian military buildup. As the Wonderboy's now shrunken and anile figure departs 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, it is my judgment that he will remain the same insufferable ass. Creatures like Jimmy never learn. □

CORRESPONDENCE

America on War and Diplomacy

I congratulate Stephen Rosen and Bob Tyrrell on a remarkable—and remarkably important—symposium in the November *American Spectator*. I fully agree that a ruthless reexamination of our foreign-cum-defense policy has been our highest priority for years; that it has been avoided like the plague by people terrorized or traumatized by the word "Vietnam"; and that we must undertake the task now, on a crash basis, or (quite literally) die.

May I raise two points—one small but important, the other large—and also important, I think.

The small point: the use of the words "liberal" and "conservative" in relation to foreign policy. In my view, they have no place in the vocabulary of the subject. "Liberal" and "conservative" have significant denotations in political and social theory (freedom versus order; tradition versus change, etc.). Those denotations have nothing to do with the use of force or coercion in international affairs. Foreign and defense policy can be prudent or reckless; wise or foolish; realistic or illusionist; aggressive or defensive. But it cannot be liberal or conservative. By every meaningful index, Henry Jackson is a "liberal," as Paul Douglas and Dean Acheson were.

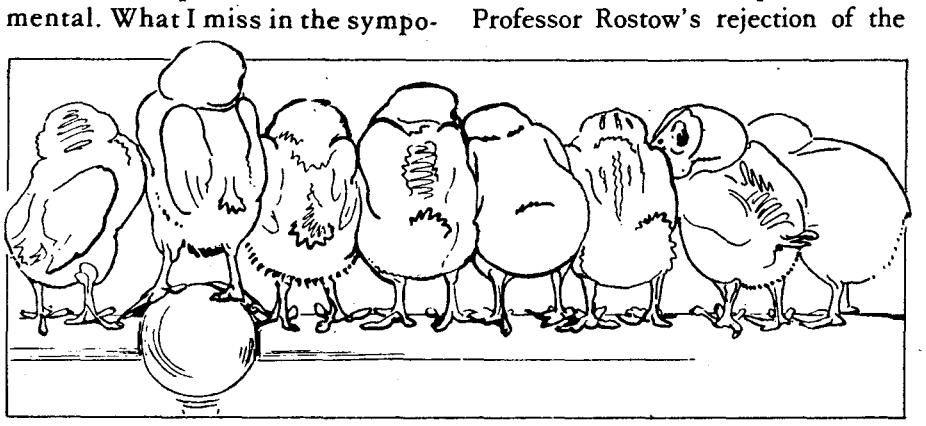
My second point is more fundamental. What I miss in the symposium is any consideration of what seems to me the central issue: Is there any criterion short of the rule of the Charter of the United Nations which could tell us when we and our Allies have to oppose the international use of force?

—Eugene V. Rostow
Yale University Law School

Stephen Rosen replies:

I have no substantive quarrel with Professor Rostow's rejection of the words "liberal" and "conservative" in relation to foreign policy. Intellectually, he is right. In practice, however, men like Jesse Helms and Barry Goldwater are tolerably distinguishable from men like George Ball and George McGovern. Both groups represent positions that are flawed. The purpose of the symposium was to go beyond both and develop the ideas of Acheson, Jackson, and others to create operational foreign and defense policies for the 1980s.

Developing a general criterion for the use of American force is much harder. We all have thought a great deal about this but have failed to come up with anything more profound than the conclusion that American intervention should be decided on a case by case basis, with due regard given to the military, ideological, diplomatic, and domestic political costs that will be borne.



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Systems Reanalysis

I should like to react to Eliot Cohen's attack on systems analysis in your November issue. I should admit that I make my living as a systems analyst and am not impartial. But I think that even an unbiased observer might admit that rational approaches are not bad in themselves. I consider systems analysis to be at about the same stage today that medicine was in 1850; it has been said that when you went to a doctor then it was even money whether he would help or hurt you. Agreed, systems analysis cannot quantify important aspects of war, like morale and generalship. Agreed, the choice of measures of effectiveness is often poor; the models are not realistic and the input values are chosen to fit the convenience or bias of the user. But, just as the Victorians went to the doctor anyway, the generals come to the systems analyst because there is no other way to look at things rationally. I cherish the hope that the state of the art will improve. In fact, though still inadequate, quality control is a leading concern of all reputable practitioners.

The essence of systems analysis is the mathematical model, an attempt to represent events by equations. *If* the representation is realistic, and *if* the input numbers are right, it follows logically that the output is right. Cohen rightly says that no model encompasses all of reality, and he could have added that the two conditions I have stated are rarely fulfilled. What then is the use of modeling? Seldom should the results be taken as gospel. (We need better users as well as better practitioners.) But if you use the results as aids to your thinking, which may be classical military thinking, and allow for their inaccuracy, they may well be useful to you (the planner). In the meantime, the analysis profession has an obligation to strive for validity—often involving experimental validation of results—and improved techniques.

Cohen is wrong in supposing that most systems analysts are social scientists. Practically all the ones I know are engineers, physical scientists, or mathematicians by training. (Younger ones may have a degree in the field itself which usually means they have been trained as mathematicians.) I myself have a degree in chemistry. All share a preference for numbers over words which is good as far as it goes. I wish more would have a preference for experimental facts over numbers.

—Aryeh H. Samuel
Wheaton, Maryland

Eliot Cohen replies:

It seems to me that Mr. Samuel's first paragraph confirms one of my observations: "Systems analysts are willing—nay, eager—to condemn defective analysis, but not to reexamine the premises of the whole approach" (p. 27). His second paragraph asserts that "systems analysis is . . . an attempt to represent events by equations." Quite so. That is why it must fail, because no human activity, particularly war, is quantifiable and mathematically predictable. Intangible elements—courage, intelligence, sheer luck—control the outcome of battles. In regard to his final paragraph let me point out that the founders of systems analysis and the authors of its sacred texts were and are economists. I observed, however, that systems analysis is not the technique of a few adepts but a mode of thought adopted by many non-economists. It is not surprising that mathematicians, engineers, and natural scientists find systems analysis congenial. Those who have been trained in the humanist fields—history, politics, or English literature for that matter—should resist much more the blandishments of those who would substitute formulas for prudence and mathematical models for reflection.

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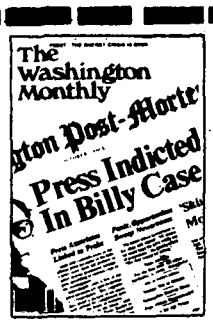

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CURRENT WISDOM

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From what is bound to become one of the classic homosexual novels of all-time we lift these heart-rending passages in hopes that all our readers will wake up before it is too late, before the barbed wire is thrown up and San Francisco is turned into a veritable ghost town:

"I don't want to date guys. It's you I'm in love with."

Jenny could see that she was really upset. She felt herself harden against the pleading look in Sandy's eyes.

"But what will people think?" Surely Sandy must realize that people would talk if they didn't date. It would be obvious.

"I don't know." Sandy misunderstood Jenny's fear. "We'll just tell them we're in love."

Jenny's voice was shrill. "Sandy, no. Never. You must promise me you will never tell anyone. If you do I'll never talk to you again. Promise me."

. . . Barbara interrupted her: "Margo, in most cases homosexuality is still a crime." The group was silent.

Sandy broke the silence. "Shelly and I have talked about it. I think we've basically come to the decision that we'll leave the country if things get too bad. Go to Canada, I guess."

"You're really taking this seriously?" Margo was now shocked.

"Prohibiting homosexual teachers from working was one of the first repressive steps the Nazis took," Julie said. "Who's to say it couldn't happen here?"

"Women are freaked out," Sandy continued. "I see it in my practice. Women come in and they're scared. Even the non-political ones. But it's the Jewish lesbians who are really panicked. They talk about concentration camps for gays. It's very real for them." Sandy shook her head. "Them. It's very real for us."

Choices
by Nancy Toder
[*Persephone Press Book News*]

The Nation

Professor Alan Wolfe, sociologist and author of *The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Threat,* ventilates another of the mysteries of the left-liberal murrain for the *Nation's* sweating and swaying audience:

Jimmy Carter will soon no longer be President, but the world that he faced has not changed very much at all. Carter, it may be recalled, pursued a foreign policy based on thoroughly conservative assumptions, except in a few areas such as Latin America. It will be difficult for the incoming Reagan Administration—on matters as diverse as nuclear strategy, new weapons systems, chemical warfare, nuclear proliferation, attitudes toward the Soviet Union, or relations with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization countries—to be more conservative than Carter was.

[*December 6, 1980*]

The New York Times

Sublime and beautiful excogitations of a historical and metaphysical nature from Mr. Frank Rich, sage and thumbsucker:

Is there anyone who grew up with the Beatles in the 1960's who can imagine life without them? The murder of John Lennon this week was the most personal kind of loss. When the news broke Monday night, ex-Beatlemaniacs, now poised on the brink of middle-age, raced to their phones to console each other, to sob, to remember. And the more we talked about those memories, the more we realized that our childhoods would have been empty without the Beatles. . . .

In a sense, the world the Beatles made was born a few years before they actually arrived. The '60's had begun with the inauguration of John F. Kennedy, a President whose youthful, iconoclastic style had started to change the whole tenor of American life. He was assassinated months before the release of "Meet the Beatles" and the group's legendary appearance on "The Ed Sullivan Show." By sheer fate, it was the Beatles who picked up Kennedy's torch, and once they did, they ran with it.

[*December 14, 1980*]

The Wall Street Journal

Professor Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. displays the journalistic feats to be accomplished once one has successfully strangled and cremated his conscience:

It is hard to see how liberalism was an issue at all in 1980. Liberal policies haven't prevailed in Washington since 1966, when Lyndon Johnson decided to sacrifice the Great Society to the Vietnam war. That was 14 years ago. . . . What the voters repudiated in 1980 was not liberalism but the miserable result of the conservative economic policies of the last half dozen years.

[*November 20, 1980*]

The Toronto Star

An undesirable alien takes up her position on the correspondence page of the Toronto Star:

I recently returned from spending a week in Toronto at the First Global Conference on the Future where I participated in the symposium, Alternative Futures for Women.

After the conference I spent one day at the Ontario Science Centre, which I found most interesting. Although the Science Centre did have many positive features, I was extremely dismayed and concerned about the excessive degree of sexism in virtually all of the films and displays. That is, almost all of the characters portrayed in the films were male, all of the narrators were male, all of the language used referred to hypothetical males, used male pronouns, and generic male terminology (e.g., mankind, early man, etc.).

I have been working to eradicate such sex bias in the U.S. educational system for about eight years and am therefore very sensitive to this tendency to disproportionately represent males in science, math and technology.

I wanted to call your readers' attention to this problem, particularly because research has shown that it does have deleterious effects on the personality development, aspirations and achievement of young females as they interact with such sex-biased environments and materials.

Jeana Wirtenberg
Department of Health
Education and Welfare
Washington, D.C

[*August 9, 1980*]

Patriotic Correspondence

Two stirring letters received by a philanthropist in the offices of *The American Spectator* after the above patriot had answered history's call and made an especially generous donation to freedom's arsenal:

October 20, 1980

Mr. Paul H. Vivian
Apartment 63
3200 Longview
Bloomington, Indiana 47401

Dear Mr. Vivian:

This past weekend I met with Governor Reagan and other leaders of our national and state campaigns.

We had a lot to discuss, as you can imagine. But the Governor made a special point of asking me to thank you, on his behalf, for your generous support of our national Republican campaign to make America great again.

New supporters like you, Mr. Vivian, are the lifeblood of our party.

And without generous $1.00 contributions like yours, there simply would be no way the National Committee could provide our national, state and local candidates with the field organization and direct cash support they must have to overcome Big Labor's massive backing of the liberal Democrats.

In the days left before the election I will be traveling around the country, talking to the voters about our Republican programs to lower taxes and put America back to work.

But I did want to take the time today to write you personally and tell you just how much I appreciate your support of the RNC at this critical time.

Very truly yours,
BILL BROCK

November 17, 1980

Dear Mr. Vivian:

I wanted to write you now, at this very special time of Thanksgiving, to tell you how grateful I am for everything you have done for our Committee.

No Party has ever had a more loyal or more dedicated friend than you, Mr. Vivian.

In the four years I've served as Chairman, I've watched our Party regain its strength, its confidence and its purpose. And I know you share my great joy that Governor Reagan and our Republican candidates have just won a decisive and historic victory for our country.

I deeply believe that you are the one who deserves a good share of the credit.

I know I have written to you many times asking for your help. And whenever you could, you gave and gave generously. For that and more, every one of our candidates owes you a special debt of gratitude.

As you celebrate Thanksgiving with your family and friends, as I will with mine, I'm sure each of us has many things for which we are grateful.

But I hold your support of our Party and your friendship as a very special blessing.

Our country is about to walk a freer, more secure road, and you have helped put us on this new path. May God grant you the blessings you so richly deserve.

Very truly yours,
BILL BROCK

The Nation

The estimable *Nation* offers high laudation to the next president of the United States while prophesying exciting times ahead:

In the nuclear era, however, based on the record from which we must make educated guesses before we can vote, he is the most dangerous person ever to come this close to the Presidency, and if elected he would be the most dangerous leader so far in history. . . . At Reagan's age, with his ideas and his advisers, in this era, he is a menace to the human race.

[*November 1, 1980*]

The New Republic

The bizarre sound of Nicholas von Hoffman's brains rattling sometime after the sad expiry of John Lennon:

The reaction of the powerful and well-placed to John Lennon's murder tells more about Americans than all the pop psychology filling the feature pages since the killing. The Kissingers, the Muskies, the Allens, the Jacksons, the whoevers from the Committee on the Present Danger, all of whom have dilated on how low American prestige has sunk, have nothing to say about this assassination. Twelve years ago, our most important religious figure, Christian prophet if you will, was gunned down. Now the madmen are going after the poets, and there's not a word from the people who claim the name "leader" about what events such as this do to our reputation in the world. American strength is seen as American power. How we conduct ourselves, what kind of a society we make and run, what kinds of values are upheld in our daily life—none of that is germane to our reputation in the world.

[*December 27, 1980*]

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A sampling from the Samuel Johnson Dictionary

EXCI'SE. *n. f.* |*accijs,* Dutch; *excifum,* Latin.| A hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by the common judges of property, but wretches hired by thofe to whom excife is paid.

Excife,
With hundred rows of teeth, the fhark exceeds,
And on all trades like Caffawar fhe feeds. *Marvel.*

PE'NSION. *n. f.* |*penfion,* Fr.| An allowance made to any one without an equivalent. In England it is generally underftood to mean pay given to a ftate hireling for treafon to his country.

He has liv'd with the great without flattery, and been a friend to men in power without *penfions.* *Pope.*

A Complimentary Gift for you...

We will also send you, free of charge, the *Anecdotes of Samuel Johnson.* Written by Hester Lynch Piozzi, one of Johnson's most intimate acquaintances, it is 196 pages of the great man's wit and wisdom. This hardcover volume, a $16.00 value, is yours as an outright gift, whether or not you decide to keep the Dictionary.

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